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AMERICA'S LOST PLAYS

XI

AN ARRANT KNAVE
and Other Plays

XII

THE COWLED LOVER
and Other Plays

A series in twenty volumes of hitherto unpublished plays collected with the aid of the Rockefeller Foundation, under the auspices of the Dramatists' Guild of the Authors' League of America, edited with historical and bibliographical notes.

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An Arrant Knave
& Other Plays

BY STEELE MACKAYE

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION, BY HIS SON
PERCY MACKAYE

INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS

BLOOMINGTON

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Stitt Macguy

FROM A CRAYON PORTRAIT BY SARONY

INTRODUCTION

THE creative activities of Steele MacKaye as dramatist covered twenty-two years (1872-1894), and comprised twenty-two first-night productions in America, all directed by himself, in which he enacted seventeen rôles in his own plays. Of these plays only two, *Hazel Kirke* and *Paul Kauvar*—both phenomenal successes—have hitherto been published. The four plays here now first published, were written within a period of fourteen years (1875-1889). An exhaustive detailed history of each, with photographs, is given in my biography of Steele MacKaye, *Epoch*.

ROSE MICHEL

In the summer of 1875, A. M. Palmer, manager of the Union Square Theatre, New York, was living near Lester Wallack in Stamford, Conn., where MacKaye then moved with his family from New York into a large, square, Colonial residence, with great shade trees—the Clark place, near Washington Street. There *Rose Michel* was written under hectic circumstances, thus recorded for me by my mother:

“Palmer was so much interested in a scenario by your father that he asked him to make an adaptation of *Rose Michel*, a French play by Ernest Blum, imported from Paris. Your father said he would not undertake it unless he had a perfectly free hand. He would take only the central idea and work out his own characters and plot. Palmer agreed. So, during our Stamford moving, he would come over from his home nearby, sit on boxes before we were unpacked, and listen to your father read aloud portions of *Rose Michel* as he finished them. Palmer was delighted, and that same autumn it was produced in New York with great success.”

Rose Michel opened at the Union Square Theatre, November 23, 1875, and ran all winter to crowded houses, closing March 18, 1876, after 112 performances there. The cast was as follows:*

* Note: The Programme lists the following personnel of the Union Square Theatre:

Proprietor
Manager
Stage Manager
Prompter
Treasurer
Musical Director
Scenic Artist
Costumer

Mr. Sheridan Shook
Mr. A. M. Palmer
Mr. John Parselle
Mr. Willie Seymour
Mr. E. H. Gouge
Mr. H. Tissington
Mr. R. Marston
T. W. Lanouette

COUNT DE VERNAY
 BARON DE MARSAN
 BARON DE BELLEVIE
 PIERRE MICHEL
 MOULINET
 MASTER BERNARD
 ANDRÉ
 OFFICER OF THE GUARD
 TURNKEY
 RUFFIAN
 SERVANT

MR. CHAS. R. THORNE, JR.
 MR. JOHN PARSELLE
 MR. FREDERICK ROBINSON
 MR. J. H. STODDART
 MR. STUART ROBSON
 MR. THOS. E. MORRIS
 MR. EBEN PLYMPTON
 MR. W. H. WILDER
 MR. LYSANDER THOMPSON
 MR. W. S. QUIGLEY
 MR. C. M. COLLINS

ROSE MICHEL

MISS ROSE EYTINGE

COUNTESS DE VERNAY
 LOUISE
 BARONESS DE BELLEVIE

MISS FANNY MORANT
 MISS NINA VARIAN
 MISS AUGUSTA RAYMOND

One of the many reviews commented: "A failure in Paris and London, the credit of its great success in New York is supposed to be due in about equal parts to the merit of Mr. MacKaye's adaptation and his stage direction of the play, the liberality of the manager in mounting it, and the skill of the actors in the Union Square Theatre."

Of those actors, Stuart Robson, in the part of a servant, Moulinet, called "Sneezer," because every time he was startled, he sneezed (a droll character written in for him by my father) made a hit with a song at the opening of Act II (words and music by my mother), sung to his dog, a little mongrel, named Pollywog. A photograph of Robson, with the dog, is reproduced in *Epoch*, Volume I, opposite page 234. Later, at the Boston Museum, *Moulinet* was acted by William Warren. Robson wrote to Steele MacKaye, May 3, 1881:

"When *Rose Michel* was produced at the Union Square Theatre, J. H. Stoddart, as *Pierre Michel*, achieved the success of the play, aided in no very small degree by your humble servant. We endeavored to carry out *your* instructions fully, for each felt that we were in the presence of a great master in our own art, and our heads took advantage of your knowledge."

The play was acted widely in stock during many years. Concerning its successful productions, the following are some data:

At Newark, N.J. (during its first New York run), in two Thanksgiving performances, Steele MacKaye acted *Pierre Michel*, Alfred Ayers, *Baron de Bellevie*, William Seymour, *Moulinet*. In May 1876, it was performed at the

Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, by the Union Square Company, and revived there in 1877, by a "picked-up" company, directed by Seymour. In 1876, it was acted in German at the Stadt Theater, New York, directed there also by Seymour, and in 1877 at the old California Theatre, San Francisco. In 1876, Sydney Rosenfeld wrote a burlesque of the play, produced at the Standard Theatre, New York. In 1889, on December 13th, Rose Eytinge revived it, at the Murray Hill Theatre, New York. In 1904, on September 5th, it was revived at the Castle Square Theatre, Boston, under stage direction of W. C. Masson.

WON AT LAST

On February 8, 1877, from his New York home, 13 West 30th Street, Lester Wallack wrote: "My dear MacKaye, If you can come to my house tomorrow (Friday) morning at eleven o'clock, I will hear the first three acts of your comedy and sincerely hope something may be done about it."

This comedy was my father's play, *Won at Last*, which—though still unfinished—Wallack thereupon accepted, and produced at his theatre, the following season, with H. J. Montague, founder and first "Shepherd" of the Lambs Club, as its "leading juvenile."

"My dear MacKaye," wrote Montague, April 19, 1877, from Washington, D.C.: "Will you, like a good fellow, seriously think of finishing my piece? I want it very badly."

In response to this urgent reminder, my father completed the play hurriedly at Stamford, where the whole last act was written in one sitting. "While writing it," my mother has recorded, "he never stirred from his chair till it was finished."

During the following summer, at Dublin, N.H., he revised the play, and gave a final reading of it to Wallack in New York on November 9th, which led at once to some "weeks of elaborate preparation" for the play's production. On December 5th, my mother wrote to him: "Can't you get Wallack to forget that he ever had a play called *How He Loved Her*, and call ours *How He Won Her*? I like that best of all." On the same date, Montague wrote to my father: "Wallack tells me you want to call the piece *John Fleming's Wife*. For heaven's sake, *don't!* Even *Tangled* is better than that. *A Life and a Love* is much better." So, up to the last minute, the play's title was unsettled till, on December 10, 1877, it was first performed, at Wallack's Theatre, with the following cast:*

* The text here first published in this volume contains nine minor characters not listed in the production at Wallack's Theatre, and is evidently an earlier version. Notably, Fleming's valet, Robert, is not listed in the cast of the Wallack Theatre version, the exact text of which may perhaps be extant among the Steele MacKaye play MSS., as yet unlisted, now in storage at the

INTRODUCTION

JOHN FLEMING

PROFESSOR TRACY

DR. STERLING

WILL TRACY

MAJOR BUNKER

BARON VON SPIEGEL

CAPTAIN MAUDLE

JACK DRISCOLL

GRACE FLEMING

MRS. TRACY

SOPHY BUNKER

FLORA FITZGIGGLE

JANE MCCARTHY

MR. H. J. MONTAGUE

MR. JOHN GILBERT

MR. W. R. FLOYD

MR. EBEN PLYMPTON

MR. E. M. HOLLAND

MR. J. W. SHANNON

MR. W. A. EYTINGE

MR. J. W. LEONARD

MISS ROSE COGHLAN

MME. PONISI

MISS GABRIELLE DU SAULD

MRS. JOHN SEFTON

MISS E. BLAISDELL

The *New York Dramatic News* wrote of the play: "It is unquestionably the best of all the American comedies thus far produced, and the author has risen at one bound to front rank. It is the most original play produced in New York for many years. It not only delighted a large audience, but it gave a practical definition to Mr. Boucicault, who sat in a stage box, of what constitutes a comedy." William Winter wrote: "The Wallack audience is usually cool; last night it was full of flame. *Won at Last* is a thorough and really brilliant success. There are reasons for believing this verdict will remain the verdict of the best judgment of the time."

"The production of a new play by an American author," wrote *The Stage*, "is an event of such rare occurrence that it provokes a vast degree of curiosity." Laid in an American setting, "on the coast of New England," as in his earlier play, *Marriage* (1872), *Won at Last* was welcomed for its indigenous characters and scenes.

Montague contracted to pay \$15,000 for the English rights. During several years, after its first run at Wallack's, it was widely acted throughout the United States, including three revivals. The first of these was a spring road tour, in which Miss Blanche Meda and Miss Ida Gray (both pupils of MacKaye in his School of Expression) acted *Grace Fleming* and *Jane McCarthy*, C. W. Couldock acting *Professor Tracy*. The tour opened at Worcester, Mass., April 22, 1878. After three weeks of short stands in New England towns, it closed with a week in Philadelphia, May 13-20. ("Immense enthusiasm—five recalls after second act, last night," wrote home my father,

library of Dartmouth College.—Having very recently returned (June 1940) from the war zone in Europe after four years abroad, the editor has had no opportunity for making this investigation of MSS., while seeing this volume through the press.

May 4th.) Everywhere the play was acclaimed, with special emphasis on its author's directorship as teacher of dramatic art.

Its second revival, under the title of *Aftermath*, in which MacKaye himself acted *John Fleming*, took place April 23, 1879, at the first opening of the Madison Square Theatre, "MacKaye's tiny Théâtre Français," closing there May 20th. "Developed in less than a month," wrote the *New York Mail* (May 17th), "the Madison Square Theatre is today regarded as one of the leading houses."

The third revival, in which MacKaye acted *John Fleming* and F. F. MacKay, *Professor Tracy*, ran one week at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, opening there March 28, 1881; two weeks of one-night stands in Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey and Connecticut; two weeks at the Bijou Theatre, New York, April 18-May 8; then Rochester, Buffalo, Detroit, Louisville, closing at Chicago in early June. On an eastern road tour of MacKaye, September 26, 1881—January 9, 1882 (opening New York, January 9), *Won at Last* was performed alternately with his play, *A Fool's Errand*.

IN SPITE OF ALL

After losing, through a bad contract, his Madison Square Theatre, with his invention there, the first moving stage, and his record-breaking success, *Hazel Kirke*, MacKaye built and directed a new playhouse, the Lyceum Theatre, which opened April 6, 1885, with his play *Dakolar*, the title rôle acted by Robert Mantell. MacKaye's second Lyceum production, opening September 15, 1885, was *In Spite of All*. Its success proved of critical importance to the careers of Minnie Maddern (Fiske), for whom he undertook it, and of Richard Mansfield, for whose special gifts of German impersonation he conceived and wrote the part of the impresario, *Herr Antonius Kraft*, upon which Mansfield based his later success, *Prince Karl*.

The play was written in part at Huber's Farm, north of Titacus, Ridgefield, Conn., in part at the old quarters of the Lambs Club, New York (34 West 26th Street), of which MacKaye was for many years the "Boy" or vice-president. In a report, as manager, to the president and trustees of the New York Theatre Company, November 4, 1885, he wrote:

"While preparing for the début of Miss Maddern, I wrote for her the play to which I gave the title of *In Spite of All*, suggested by Sardou's *Andrea*. I entirely reconstructed and changed the original story, laying the scene in New York instead of Vienna, reducing the cast from 19 characters to 8, and making each character a type of my own selection. I also reduced the number of scenes from six to two."

In the cast, winning his first acting spurs as Impresario Kraft's "call-boy," under the stage name, "William Payson," was his gifted sixteen-year-old son, William Payson MacKaye, who died four years later. Minnie Maddern was then nineteen. Forty years afterward she (Mrs. Fiske) wrote to me: "One night at the Lyceum Theatre, your father introduced Henry Arthur Jones to me behind the scenes, and Mr. Jones in his turn introduced the young newspaper-man who happened to be in his company that evening—a Mr. Harrison Grey Fiske! A relative of mine, Mr. Shepard, arranged with your father for his adaptation of the Sardou play, *Andrea*, which your father very skilfully turned into a play of New York. There was a brilliant cast and your father directed rehearsals. I remember his great kindness and helpfulness to a young actress."

The programme of the opening night at the Lyceum Theatre, printed in grey-green on chrome-yellow antique paper, is reproduced in the accompanying illustration. The cast was as follows:*

ALICE CLANDENNING

STELLA

BESSIE

LOUISE

CARROL CLANDENNING

ANTONIUS KRAFT

MR. HARTMANN

JACK KNICKERBOCKER

CALL BOY

MINNIE MADDERN

SELINA DOLARO

JOAN GOODRICH

MARIE HARTLEY

EBEN PLYMPTON

RICHARD MANSFIELD

JOHN A. LANE

JOSEPH FRANKAU

WILLIAM PAYSON

Of MacKaye's new patented inventions here referred to, the "Orchestral Pavilion" was a shallow, movable stage, on which the orchestra, after playing, was lifted into the flies behind the folds of the curtain, which did not rise and fall, but swept from the side in its closings and unclosings—the first of its kind. His Lyceum Theatre, designed by him, was the first electric-lighted theatre in New York, and its electric equipment was personally installed by his friend and crony, Thomas A. Edison.

Under caption, "A Success For Steele MacKaye," *Freund's Music and Drama* wrote: "A highly cultured audience gathered once more in that prettiest of all theatres in New York—the Lyceum of Steele MacKaye, a foremost man in the artistic world. The interest was intense. The stamp of an original worker is on the play . . . especially in one new person—Herr Antonius

*In the text here first published, *Jack Knickerbocker* of this Lyceum Theatre cast appears as *Jack Harrington*. The change of name may have been a last-minute alteration, or perhaps may indicate that the text in this volume is that of an earlier version.

Kraft, the outstanding creation of the play, acted by Dick Mansfield. Minnie Maddern is a whimsical genius who, with study, will develop into one of the brightest leaders of the stage. Nevertheless, she must speak more distinctly."

To follow *In Spite of All* at the Lyceum, MacKaye, as manager, selected a play by his dramatist-rival, Bronson Howard, *One of Our Girls*, in which E. H. Sothern then made his first mark in America. That season, Minnie Maddern took *In Spite of All* on tour, and later, as Mrs. Fiske, successfully revived it in after years: in 1888 at Philadelphia, in 1897 at New York; and notably, in 1889, on a road tour including Toronto, during which William Faversham acted *Carol Clandenning*.

AN ARRANT KNAVE

In 1873, Steele MacKaye acted *Hamlet* in London and the English Provinces to the *Ophelia* of Marion Terry (sister of Ellen), who then made her début at sixteen. The title of his play undoubtedly occurred to its author in recollection of those acting days when, as the Danish Prince, he rendered Shakespeare's lines:

"There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he's an arrant knave."

On July 15, 1888, while acting in his play, *A Noble Rogue*, at Chicago, my father wrote to my mother: "I am hard at work on a new play." On August 21, 1888, he received the following telegram: "Cohasset, Mass. Steele MacKaye, 560 Division Street, Chicago. Delighted to hear it. Rather have a play by you than by any man in America. When shall I expect you? Answer. Stuart Robson." At Cohasset, on August 29, 1888, a contract was signed by Steele MacKaye and Stuart Robson for a romantic comedy, entitled *Chiqui* (later named *An Arrant Knave*), with advance payment of \$1,500 down.

On February 6, 1889, my father wrote from New York to my mother: "I am finishing an elaborate prompt-copy of *An Arrant Knave* for Robson." On July 7, 1889, the St. Louis *Republic* commented: "Steele MacKaye and Bronson Howard are summering with Stuart Robson, at Cohasset, Mass., where Booth and Barrett also have cottages. Mr. MacKaye and Mr. Howard are delightfully occupied on the comedian's steam yacht while Mr. MacKaye puts finishing touches on *An Arrant Knave*. MacKaye says Howard's *The Henrietta* is the best play since *The School for Scandal*, and Howard asserts MacKaye's mediaeval comedy possesses 'the true Shakespearean savor, and is entitled to rank with *A Comedy of Errors*.'" Rehearsed by MacKaye at Boston during the first week of September 1889, *An Arrant Knave* opened

with brilliant success at the Chicago Opera House, September 30, 1889, with Robson in the rôle of *Chiqui, the Knave*. The cast was as follows:

CHIQUEI, THE KNAVE

MARCO

HUGO

PHILIPPO

PAULO

TORRIANI

VICO

JACKO

SERGEANT

CLAUDIA

LAURA

RITA

LUCA

MARIA

MR. STUART ROBSON

MR. REVEL GERMAINE

MR. JAMES D. WILSON

MR. FRANK MORDAUNT

MR. EDWARD J. RATCLIFFE

MR. GEORGE S. WOODWARD

MR. JOHN L. WOODERSON

MR. ERNEST TARLETON

MR. WILLIAM MACLEAN

MISS MAY WALDRON

MISS CATHERINE FLORENCE

MISS HELEN MAR

MISS EUGENIA LINDEMAN

MISS JENNIE R. BURBY

The following are some comments of the reviewers: *Chicago Journal* (October 1): "The 'standees' were packed many rows deep. *An Arrant Knave* is Steele MacKaye's most ambitious work—undeniably original, daring and ingenious. The rhythmical blank verse is full of epigrams that should live to be quoted." *Chicago Inter Ocean* (October 1): "*An Arrant Knave* is a most fantastic, vexatious work, as full of contraries as its brilliant, erratic author himself. The banter of words is well assumed by Mr. Robson. His braggadocio, his spryness, his superficial cunning, his absolute cowardice were irresistibly ludicrous." *St. Paul Republic* (October 1): "A comedy of a high order; its intense situations, poetic, dramatic, comic, change rapidly in a plot of villainous intrigues, sentiments, heroism, action and comedy of a charming type." *Pittsburgh Dispatch* (October 6): "The *New York World* labels *An Arrant Knave* 'one of the best comedies ever written,' and says that 'it places its author at the head of American playwrights beyond all peradventure.'" *Minneapolis Tribune*: "The possible forerunner of a new school, MacKaye's play is the most ambitious modern attempt thus far in 'poetical comedy.'" *St. Louis Republic* (October 17): "If Shakespeare can be imitated, Mr. MacKaye is as well qualified, perhaps, as any man in America to do it, standing as he does as one of the little knot of playwrights who have contributed to the American stage that which is excellent on it."

Two photographs of Robson, as Chiqui, are reproduced in *Epoch*, Volume II, opposite page 220.

On a tour, lasting from September 30, 1889, till the following March, alternating with *The Henrietta*, it was performed at the principal "stands" of one week or more. At St. Louis, during the week of October 13-20, MacKaye himself acted in it the rôle of *Philippo*, Duke of Morena. In Cincinnati, Colonel Henry Watterson gave a notable luncheon in honor of the production there. On March 17, 1890, the New York *Star* commented: "Stuart Robson returned to town yesterday, enthusiastic. 'We have had a wonderfully successful season in the West. I have not decided yet whether to open in New York with *The Henrietta* or *An Arrant Knave*. In some towns the critics have lauded *The Knave* to the skies, in others it has had only faint praise. I want to see what New York thinks of it.'"

In early April, from Philadelphia, W. R. Hayden, Robson's business manager, wrote to MacKaye asking him to make some alterations in the play's text, urgently suggested by Robson, and adding: "Mr. Robson has stoutly maintained his belief in the ultimate triumph of the play, and we propose to do it in New York, April 21st. Now, will you grant my appeal to make the alterations *immediately*?"

Unfortunately, this communication reached MacKaye when he was immersed in strenuous rehearsals of the New York opening of his play, *Money Mad*, so that this request for "immediate" revision was then impracticable of response. In consequence, *An Arrant Knave* was never produced in New York. It has not been revived since then.

The melody of Chiqui's song, "Hie-die-diddle," on page 209, was once sung to me by my father and has been preserved by me. The "rhythmical blank verse," mentioned by the critic above, is scanable in many pages throughout the play which are not printed here in blank verse form, for he thought and wrote "audibly" for audiences, not "visually" for readers. As a lad, I saw the play performed in Washington, and I know that—as produced and directed by its author and acted by the admirable comedian, Robson—it possessed a highly fantastic charm rarely attained in the theatre. My father wrote very little verse, most of the songs in his plays being supplied by my mother; yet poetry was always for him a deeply ardent influence. At the age of nineteen, he wrote in a notebook:

"The true poet gives nature a new meaning. Revealing the relations of man to creation, he binds men together by ties invisible to the more material mirror, but strong as the universe itself."

TEXTS OF THE FOUR PLAYS

The texts of the plays here published are printed from photostats of four bound typewritten scripts, typed years ago, at various times, by secretaries of mine, from my father's prompt-copies, long preserved, first by my mother at the MacKaye Cottage (Shirley Center, Mass.), then for years by me at my home in Cornish, N.H., and now in fireproof storage at Dartmouth College Library, Hanover, N.H. The prompt-copies are as follows:

Rose Michel: hand-script, copied from Steele MacKaye's original manuscript, very probably by Alfred Becks, who was "loaned" by Palmer at times to be my father's secretary at Stamford, Conn. (1875-79), and who later—till his death, in 1925—was secretary to the magician, Harry Houdini. *Won at Last*: hand-script, copied from MacKaye's original script, probably by his secretary, William Pickett (son of the famous Confederate general), at Dublin, N.H., summer of 1877. *In Spite of All*: typed script, probably typed from Steele MacKaye's original manuscript, at Lyceum Theatre, New York, September, 1885. *An Arrant Knave*: typed script, copied from Steele MacKaye's original manuscript, or from his dictation, at Block Island, near Cohasset, Mass., August, 1888.

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- PAUL KAUVAR: Included in *Representative Plays by American Dramatists*, edited with a Foreword to *Paul Kauvar*, by Montrose J. Moses. E. P. Dutton, New York, 1921.
- EPOCH: *The Life of Steele MacKaye, Genius of the Theatre, In Relation to His Times & Contemporaries*. A Memoir by his son, Percy MacKaye. 2 vols. 400 illus., with charts of MacKaye's inventions; 1100 pages, with index. Boni & Liveright, New York, 1927. For *Rose Michel*: cf. Vol. I, pp. 242-7; also 3 photographs: Stoddart, as *Pierre Michel*; Robson, as *Moulinet*; and Stage-Setting, designed by Steele MacKaye, from a painting by him, 1875—plate 39, opp. p. 234. For *Won at Last*: cf. Vol. I, pp. 266, 272-4, 278-83, 299-304; also 3 photographs: H. J. Montague—plate 42, opp. p. 267; C. W. Couldock, as *Prof. Tracy*, 1879; and Steele MacKaye, as *John Fleming*, taken with F. F. MacKay, as *Prof. Tracy*, 1881—plate 52, opp. p. 411. For *In Spite of All*: cf. Vol. II, pp. 31-55; also 2 photographs: Maddern and Mansfield—plate 63, opp. p. 40. For *An Arrant Knave*: cf. Vol. II, pp. 176-80, 209, 213, 217-27; also 2 photographs: Robson, as *Chiqui* in 2 poses—plate 81, opp. p. 220. Cf. also, Bibliography, in Addenda, pp. civ-vii.

ANNALS OF AN ERA: *Percy MacKaye and the MacKaye Family: 1826-1932*. Comprising Records Chiefly Included in the MacKaye Collection at the Dartmouth College Library. Edited by E. O. Grover. Published under the auspices of Dartmouth College; 1932. 534 pages, with index. For Steele MacKaye, cf. pp. 315, 316, 365-71, 486-7, 516-17. (Consultable at New York Public Library, Harvard University Library, Dartmouth College Library, and Library of Congress.) To those monumental records many years of detailed labors were devoted by Marion Morse MacKaye (Mrs. Percy MacKaye), to whom *Epoch* is dedicated as the author's "Collaborator" in that work, as well. Cf. pages 238, 255, of *My Lady Dear, Arise!* by Percy MacKaye. Macmillan, New York, 1940.

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THE STORY OF THE THEATRE: pp. 338-43, 355-6, 372, 378, 381. Steele MacKaye: Artist-Philosopher of the Theatre: His Excelling Many-Sidedness, by Glenn Hughes. (Samuel French, New York, 1928.) Excerpt, p. 343: "Steele MacKaye's visions were never idle. He was extremely philosophic, but his speculations led to action. He gave to the American Theatre more than any one man has ever given it, or likely ever will."

A complete chronological list of Steele MacKaye's Plays, together with his Rôles therein, as actor and as actor-manager, and his *circa* 100 patented Stage-Inventions, is to be found in *Epoch*, Vol. II, pp. xvi, xvii, xviii, xix.

CENTENARY

The birthplace of Steele MacKaye, built by his father, Colonel James MacKaye, at Fort Porter, Buffalo, N.Y., long known as "MacKaye Castle," later purchased by the Federal Government, then by the City of Buffalo and rechristened "The Peace House," now stands at the American entrance of the great Peace Bridge between Canada and the United States, where *the Sixth of June, 1942*, will mark the Centenary of his birth—an event whose national significance, according to plans already initiated, may hopefully bring to his notable achievements as dramatist, actor, philosopher, architect, inventor and theatre artist, their fitting token of permanent commemoration.

PERCY MACKAYE

The Players, New York
October, 1940



THE LYCEUM THEATRE

STEELE . MACKAYE

GENERAL . MANAGER

EVERY . EVENING . AT . 8:30

SATURDAY . MATINEE . AT . 2

TUESDAY . EVENING . SEPTEMBER . 15 . 1885

FIRST . APPEARANCE . OF

MISS . MINNIE . MADDERN

In an entirely new version of SARDOU'S "ANDREA," written especially for her by MR. MACKAYE,
author of "Hazel Kille," "Won at Last," etc., etc., entitled

"IN . SPITE . OF . ALL"

Special engagements have been made for this play with the following well known artists :

MME . SELINA . DOLARO

MR . EBEN . PLYMPTON

MR . RICHARD . MANSFIELD

CAST . OF . CHARACTERS

ALICE CLANDENNING	MISS . MINNIE . MADDERN ✓
STELLA . PRIMA . DONNA . OF . THE . COMIC . OPERA	MME . SELINA . DOLARO ✓
BESSIE . MRS . CLANDENNING'S . MAID	MISS . JOAN . GOODRICH ✓
LOUISE . STELLA'S . MAID	MISS . MARIE . HARTLEY ✓
CARROL . CLANDENNING	MR . EBEN . PLYMPTON ✓
HERR . ANTONIUS . KRAFT . IMPRESSARIO	MR . RICHARD . MANSFIELD ✓
MR . HARTMANN . JEWELLER	MR . JOHN . A . LANE ✓
JACK . KNICKERBOCKER . THE . BROTHER	MR . JOSEPH . FRANKAU ✓
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ACT . 1ST.—THE . HOME-ROOM . AT . CLANDENNING'S . HOUSE

ACT . 2D.—STELLA'S . DRESSING-ROOM . AT . THE . THEATRE

ACT . 3D.—SCENE . SAME . AS . ACT . 1ST

ACT . 4TH.—SCENE . SAME . AS . ACTS . 1ST . AND . SECOND

TIME — THE . PRESENT

THE . DISCOVERY

THE . CONFIRMATION

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ROSE MICHEL

A ROMANTIC DRAMA

IN FIVE ACTS

(1875)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

COUNT DE VERNAY, *a young noble*

BARON DE MARSAN, *Prefect of the Seine*

BARON DE BELLEVIE, *a roué*

PIERRE MICHEL, *an innkeeper*

MOULINET, *his servant*

MASTER BERNARD, *a goldsmith*

ANDRÉ, *his son*

OFFICER OF THE GUARD

ONE OF THE RABBLE

TURNKEY

JEAN, *clerk*

ROSE MICHEL, *wife of Pierre*

COUNTESS DE VERNAY

LOUISE, *daughter of Pierre*

BARONESS DE BELLEVIE

GUARDS, TORCHBEARERS, RABBLE, ETC.

SCENES

ACT I: THE GRAND ENTRANCE TO THE DE VERNAY PALACE, WITH A VIEW OF THE
SEINE AND THE CHURCH OF NOTRE DAME.

ACT II: THE KITCHEN OF PIERRE MICHEL'S HOUSE.

ACT III: A GRAND SALON IN THE HOUSE OF THE COUNT DE VERNAY.

ACT IV: THE KITCHEN OF PIERRE MICHEL'S HOUSE.

ACT V: GALLERY OF THE PRISON OF LITTLE CHATELET, WITH A VIEW OF PARIS BY
MOONLIGHT.

TIME: LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

PLACE: FRANCE.

ACT I.

SCENE: *Paris, 1765. A quay on the Seine, opposite the Isle St. Louis. In background, steps leading down to the river. Downstage in front and to right, façade of the Count de Vernay's palace. To left, with a little garden in front of it, the entrance to the shop of Bernard, the Goldsmith, whose sign is over the doorway. There are rustic seats in the garden. Fine view of the river and old Paris in the background. As curtain rises a Rabble mount steps from the river, and look mysteriously around; presently one of them turns and beckons. Baron de Bellevie, seedily attired, comes forward up to the steps, L.U.E.*

ONE OF THE RABBLE. [*To De Bellevie*] Here, my lord, is the palace of the Count de Vernay.

BARON. Good. Now, lads, go back and hide below the quay until I signal for ye. [*Rabble descend out of sight. The Baron advances and surveys the Count's Palace*] So, there's where she dwells, snugly housed beneath the roof of the Count de Vernay, her paramour. At least, I call him so for reasons of my own, though I know she's far too cold and proud to play the wanton, even though it were to Jove himself. The Countess de Vernay, mother of the count, has been made her guardian by the King. Well, what of that? I will still pretend that with her noble name, she shields the amours of her son. And I will threaten to tear off the gilded veil that hides the base corruption of their gilded house. So much for that, a good sound plot. [*Looking around*] Well, here I am again in Paris. I, Gaston de Bellevie, or as I'm called, the Baron de Bauchery. [*Laughing*] I confess I love gay living. So does all the world. But I am open in my pleasures, while those who cast me off are secret in their vice. Hypocrites in saintly masks. Well, this wife of mine, whom I have not seen for four long years, shall bleed her noble friend for me. His pride shall fill my pockets or his haughty name be degraded to the dust. Ah, here comes a pauper. [*Enter Moulinet with something in his apron, which he is busy with*] I will get the latest gossip from him: it may be useful.

MOUL. Shss-s-sh! There. There, thou faithless beast, be quiet. I would have thee a surprise for her. [*A cat mews*] Be quiet, cat, or I will eat thee for a spoil-all. Peace, I say, sweet vermin. Thy time to sing has not yet come. [*The Baron touches him suddenly on the shoulder; he starts and sneezes violently*] Saints! What lord is this, here at such an hour? 'Tis not yet seven in the morning, and our masters lie abed till twelve.

BARON. Tell me, fellow, do you live hereabouts?

MOUL. Aye, my lord. I live here, but eat and sleep and spend my time in other parts.

BARON. And how is that?

MOUL. Why, sir, if love is life, as wise men say, then all my life is here, for here is all my love.

BARON. [*Laughing*] How can such as you love?

MOUL. Saving your honor, that's all we're good for, to love. Not as lords do for their delight, but as the poor must, to their sorrow. Will you have the truth, sir?

BARON. Aye, give it to me. I love to laugh.

MOUL. [*Pointing to Bernard's shop*] There in that house lives the fair Louise. She's apprenticed to Bernard, the goldsmith. Well, sir, I love her. [*Baron laughs*] Nay, not as you would understand that word do I love her, my lord, but with true simplicity, purely as my dogs and cats and rats love me.

BARON. You're a strange fellow. What's your name?

MOUL. Moulinet's my name, but that's not what I'm called.

BARON. Well, what are you called then?

MOUL. Alas, the world has dubbed me Sneezer, the Catchall.

BARON. [*Laughing*] And why Sneezer, the Catchall?

MOUL. Sneezer, because of my infirmity. Whenever I'm embarrassed or surprised I sneeze, I know not why.

BARON. And why Catchall?

MOUL. Because I catch all the strolling beasts I find that have no home or hope. Cats, dogs, geese, aye, and if I dared, even skunks should find a friend in me.

BARON. Of course, birds of a feather flock together.

MOUL. Oh, that I were a bird with a feather, that I might fly from man!

BARON. From man perhaps, but not from woman, eh? Come, good philanthropic beggar, who is she you love? You said that she was fair; now I'm fond of fair women—tell me all, I may serve her and you. Who is she?

MOUL. An angel, lost in this dark dream called life. She is the daughter of my patron, Pierre Michel.

BARON. [*Starting*] Pierre Michel? Ah, indeed.

MOUL. Aye, Pierre Michel. 'Tis well Louise is apprenticed here, for if she lived at home she'd starve, and when she died her father'd sell her holy bones to some sacrilegious leech that he might hack at them. Yes, he'd even sell her soul to add a denier to his store of gold.

BARON. Where lives her father now?

MOUL. Farther up the river, near the Bastille's water gate.

BARON. But does he know you come to visit her?

MOUL. 'Tis he that sends me, or I'd never have the chance to come. He sends me here to get the money that his daughter saves, and if she failed to send it, he would make her leave this house, where she is very, very happy.

BARON. And why so happy?

MOUL. Because she loves and is beloved. Indeed they say that André, the goldsmith's son, will marry her. A noble match, Heaven knows. For both are young and good and comely. [*Suddenly starting and striking an attitude*] Stay. I am inspired. Listen to my muse.

A seraph falls from Heaven in a dream:
On earth she falls, by mortals called Louise.
Where e'er she walks,
The earth with verdure smiles;
When e'er she talks,
Her breath the world beguiles
With sweetness, rich as any breeze
Floating from the spicy Isles. [*Crosses to C.*]

BARON. What, would you couple Louise with a breeze? Pah! Your muse is flimsy. Be substantial. Couple her with "tease" or "squeeze" and I'm your man. [*Laughing, taps Moulinet on shoulder*] But you're a rare rogue. Poet, philosopher, and—

MOUL. [*Quickly*] A fool—yes, by nature philosopher, by circumstances a fool. [*The Baron looks off R. mysteriously, then approaches Moulinet and suddenly nudges him on the side. He sneezes and exclaims*] What, now, my lord?

BARON. [*Looking R., pointing off*] Who is that young girl that comes this way?

MOUL. Why, that is she, the one she of this world to this poor clod. Gentle Louise, my patron's daughter.

BARON. [*Aside*] By the Saints! She's beautiful—aye, divine enough to tempt an angel out of Heaven. And is this the daughter of that old rascal, Pierre Michel? Thank Fate, I know her father, for she just suits my fancy. This fellow says his master would sell his daughter's soul for money. She's worth possessing at any cost. I'll see old Pierre this very day and make a bid for this young beauty. [*Crossing to L.C.*]

MOUL. See, my lord, how meekly sweet she comes from early mass. She and the Baroness de Bellevie are faithful to their prayers.

BARON. What is that you say of the Baroness de Bellevie?

MOUL. That she is faithful to her prayers, for she, like Louise, attends early mass. There she always lingers for saintly converse with the cardinal.

BARON. And will she return here soon?

MOUL. She should be here at any moment.

BARON. [*Aside*] Superb! We're ready. I will assail her here.

MOUL. [*Up L.*] But see, my patron's daughter comes. I pray you stand aside, my lord. I have private words for her from home. [*Coming down*]

BARON. [*Going up*] Ah, play your part, poor fool, for I have mine to think of. [*Music. The Baron descends steps. Louise enters, R.U.E., with her prayer book. Moulinet kneels in her path. Louise comes on him, starts and pauses*]

LOUISE. [*R.C.*] Ah, Moulinet. You here, and on your knees?

MOUL. [*L.C.*] Aye, dear mistress, on my knees to crave your pardon. You know for what I come.

LOUISE. [*Sighing and taking out purse*] Aye, poor fellow, I do. But you need not ask my pardon, you are not to blame. Rise, and Heaven bless your kindly heart. Take this; I dared this day to give a mite to God's neglected poor. I hope my father will not miss it.

MOUL. [*Aside*] I'll take good care he don't. I have some saving of my own. I'll make up the usual sum.

LOUISE. Have you no word from my mother?

MOUL. I have. She bade me tell you to be of good courage. She has bought a day free of your father: she will be here soon.

LOUISE. My mother be here soon? Oh, joy! I have not seen her for six months.

MOUL. Aye. Joy be to ye both. Would I could stay to witness it. But before I go, I pray you accept a gift. 'Tis poor like me, but then, like me, it lives and it can love. [*Takes a wretched looking kitten from his apron*] Behold. 'Tis the finest of all my litter in my garret. Lavish your love on this, dear mistress, for this will not betray.

LOUISE. [*Embarrassed*] Thanks, good Moulinet, thanks. But I fear the poor thing would miss its master. Keep it for me, and if I ever have a home that I can call my own, you shall come with it to live with me.

MOUL. Oh, sweet mistress, kind mistress. Your voice and words are like an angel's blessing to us both. You're right, we will go back. Farewell, a poor man's prayers go up for you by day and night.

LOUISE. Farewell, good Moulinet. [*Kissing kitten*] And there, I give him that for you.

MOUL. And I'll take good care he gives it back to me again. Once more farewell. Your father frets for my return. [*Exit quickly, R.U.E.*]

LOUISE. [*Alone and looking after Moulinet. Going up*] How hard he works for what he gets, and how lavishly he shares his little with the outcast creatures of the street! Ah, his heart is sterling gold. But alas, his head is somewhat strange. My mother coming today? Ah, how glad I'll be to see her. [*Sadly*] I can confide to her the fears that torture me. I must leave this house I love so much, aye, leave it though it kill me. I can no longer trust myself to hide my love from the eyes of others. [*She sighs and falls into a pensive attitude, as André enters, R.U.E., and watches her*]

ANDRÉ. [*R. Aside*] Ah! There she is. I will chide her for deserting me. [*As Louise is about entering the house, he turns and speaks to her. She starts and turns*] Louise! Louise, stay awhile. Why did you leave the mass so early? Why did you not bide for me?

LOUISE. I have work that must be quickly done. I cannot stay. I must go in to do it. [*Going up L.*]

ANDRÉ. Nay, Louise, grant me one moment. I have news for you. [*She turns again*] Aye. News that will amaze you. Louise, I have never known other sister than yourself. I am now in deep perplexity. I need a sister's sympathy. A woman's wisdom, too, to guide me. Will you give me yours?

LOUISE. The little that I have, my friend.

ANDRÉ. Well, then, here's my news. But be sure to keep it secret. Louise, I am in love.

LOUISE. [*Starting*] Ah!

ANDRÉ. Yes, in love. The one I love, the world may deem beneath me, but she is fair and pure and good. In short, God's own as much as any duchess. She is the light of both my eyes, the strength of both my hands, the inmost soul of all my manhood. Tell me, do I not love her well?

LOUISE. [*With effort*] Yes, André.

ANDRÉ. You would love her, too, if you knew her as I do.

LOUISE. I love her now, that she's so much that's good to you.

ANDRÉ. Then promise that you will plead with her for me.

LOUISE. [*With emotion*] I plead with her for you? [*Impetuously*] No. No. That would be too much. I could not, could not do it.

ANDRÉ. Oh, don't say that, for without your pleading there would be little hope for me.

LOUISE. [*Surprised*] And do I know her, then?

ANDRÉ. Yes, a little, but very little I assure you, for she's the one of whom you seem to think the least in all this world. You must love her more hereafter for my sake.

LOUISE. [*Suffering*] I will try, André. [*Aside*] But I fear 'twill be a bitter task. [*Aloud*] Now, tell me, who is she?

ANDRÉ. Of all the maidens we both know, which seems to you the worthiest of such love as this?

LOUISE. I know not one that's worthy.

ANDRÉ. Ah! How very little, then, you know my love. [*Taking both her hands in his*] Look in my eyes, Louise, for there, gazing into yours, you'll find the image of the woman that I love. [*She looks up bewildered*] Look close, and see the angel face that's mirrored there. Look but deep enough and you will see that same fair image graven on the living walls of my heart's core. Guess no more, dear one, for 'tis you I love.

LOUISE. [*Burying her head with sobs of joy on his breast*] Oh, André, André!

ROSE. [*Outside*] This way did she go? Never fear, I will find her. [*Music. Slight pause. The voice of a woman is heard singing a happy song. Louise starts from André's side, exclaiming*]

LOUISE. [*L.C.*] Oh! That voice, how well I know it. It comes nearer and nearer. [*Rose Michel rushes into her arms*] My mother!

ROSE. [*C.*] My child, my child! [*Holding her at arm's length, proudly*] Though she might be a princess, if the shining beauty of a spotless soul ever made one.

ANDRÉ. [*L. Enthusiastically*] True. True as holy writ.

ROSE. Heyday! Who's this that echoes me so warmly? What, André, is it you? Give me your hand. You're a good lad, but hereafter mind your own affairs. Never interrupt a mother's worship of her child or she may fall to loving you. And then who knows what dreadful things? [*Enter Bernard from shop, L.2.E.*] But see, here comes your father.

BERN. [*Down between Rose and André*] What's all this noise out here so early? How, is it you, Rose Michel? I am glad to see you, for I have something to say to you alone. [*Crosses to Rose. He kisses her forehead*]

ROSE. When these dear ones have gone. [*To Louise*] One more embrace, my darling. [*Holding Louise upon her breast*] Ah! Master Bernard, 'tis this that brings our anxious hearts repose. Yesterday I longed to die. Today as I hold this precious child upon my breast, I am content to live and suffer anything. Yes, I would even face the bitter past again for one short moment such as this. [*Kisses her passionately*] Ah, my joy, my consolation and my life.

LOUISE. Oh, mother, mother.

ROSE. There, go and stroll upon the quay, but do not wander out of sight. I must see you all I can while I am here. [*They embrace and then Louise and André exeunt U.E.R.*]

BERN. Well, Rose?

ROSE. Well, Master Bernard?

BERN. [*Pointing at André and Louise*] Look at them, a fine couple. We are happy in our children. [*Crosses L. and sits*]

ROSE. Yes, André is a brave and honest lad.

BERN. And Louise a lovely girl who works with courage; yes, a worthy child who merits all our love. She must be a great comfort to your wretched life.

ROSE. But I am not so wretched, Master Bernard.

BERN. 'Tis useless to tell me that, good Rose, for I remember well that poor woman, pale and wild, who came to me ten years ago, a little girl of seven, ill and wan, upon her arm. "Take her, Master Bernard," cried that woman, "take her and save her from her father."

ROSE. [*Bowing her head*] Yes, 'tis true, alas. He would have killed my poor Louise. The doctors said she was so delicate she could not live, and yet her father would have starved her. Ah, his real child, the one he cherishes with constant care, is gold.

BERN. Why did you not desert the monster?

ROSE. Because in revenge he would have torn my child away from me.

BERN. Yes, 'tis for your child that you stay with that wild beast, who enslaves and beats you. Come, Rose, be frank. You must tell me the whole truth. The moment has come for that.

ROSE. The moment, what moment?

BERN. Among all the griefs that Pierre has caused you, tell me frankly, have you ever known him to be dishonest?

ROSE. Why do you ask that?

BERN. Because we can pardon everything but that. Honesty for us. My father's stainless honor won for him the badge of syndic to his corporation. His honor and his title have passed intact to me.

ROSE. All the world knows this. Why do you speak of it now?

BERN. Because we can't have on any of our family the smallest taint or stain.

ROSE. On any of your family—but I and mine are none of yours. [*André and Louise reappear at back, R., hand in hand, conversing earnestly*]

BERN. Not yet. But look yonder. See those children, Rose. They love each other and I love them both.

ROSE. Oh, Heaven! Can it be that you would make Louise—my Louise—

BERN. My son's wife, yes, perhaps—

ROSE. Oh, you drive me mad with joy.

BERN. Gently, Rose, gently. Answer first my question. Have you ever known dishonor in your husband?

ROSE. No, Master Bernard. Pierre is a miser, brutal if you will, but dishonest, no, thank Heaven, no.

BERN. And can you swear this?

ROSE. Yes, I can swear it on my honor.

BERN. Thank Heaven. For let me tell you if there were a shadow of dishonor on Louise's parents she could never be allied to any child of mine. In this respect you'd find me firm, aye, heartless.

ROSE. And you are right, my friend.

BERN. And yet, Rose, 'tis for Louise that I should tremble. She's sensitive, intense and fragile. Now she loves André with all her heart's strength of her deep nature. To lose him would be certain death to one like her.

ROSE. Oh, my friend, you fill me full of terror.

BERN. Nay. That's foolish now. 'Tis not fear but joy that you should feel. Come, we'll make a holiday of this. [*Rises*] You shall spend it here with us, and we'll make plans for the betrothal of our children. When this day is gone you shall return and tell your husband. He will not fail to give his sanction to the marriage, for I am rich, and that will weigh with him.

ROSE. Oh, I am bewildered with this happiness. I am not used to days like this. [*Rises*] When shall we announce this news to André and Louise?

BERN. This very morning after we have broken fast. But now, let's go in. [*They are about to enter the house when André suddenly comes forward*]

ANDRÉ. Stay, father. There's something wrong. There is a crowd of ill-favored rascals lurking here beneath the quay. They're behaving very strangely. I'm sure they're not there for good. [*Bernard and Rose turn back from the door. Louise comes forward with excitement*]

LOUISE. One of them is coming up the steps. [*Music. Ruffian appears, looks off R. a moment, then turns and beckons to someone beneath him*]

BERN. Nonsense, child, 'tis nothing, I will question this fellow. [*He goes upstage, but pauses as the Baron de Bellevie appears*]

RUFFIAN. There she comes, my lord, returning from the morning mass.

BARON. Good. Hide close. And when you hear me raise my voice, hasten here and witness what occurs. [*Ruffian disappears. Bernard, Rose, André and Louise look on in wonder as Blanche, the Baroness de Bellevie, enters R.U.E. Suddenly the Baron arrests her passage*] Stay, madam. A word with you.

BLANCHE. What do you wish from me, sir?

BARON. I would have your company, by day and night.

BLANCHE. Who are you that dare accost me thus?

BARON. [*Exposing his face by taking off his hat and raising his voice*] Your long-lost husband, lady. [*Blanche shrieks and recoils. At shriek from Blanche, all the Rabble rush on and fill up back of stage. The Baron advances*]

and seizes Blanche by the arm] Yes, your husband who has returned to take you to his arms again.

BLANCHE. [*Shrieking*] Help! Help!

BERN. [*Advancing*] Unhand her, sir. Who are you that dare thus outrage in our open streets?

BARON. Your lord and master, and her lord: the Baron de Bellevie. [*All recoil in horror*]

BLANCHE. Let me go, monster.

BARON. Let you go where, my pet? There, back to the arms of your paramour, the Count de Vernay?

BLANCHE. [*Screaming*] Save me! Save me! Oh, is there no one man enough to save me from this fiend?

VERNAY. [*Rushing from his palace, R.2.E.*] Who cries for safety here? What, Blanche, is it you? [*Sees the Baron still holding her and throws him on the ground*] Lie there, audacious dog! [*Tableau*]

BARON. [*Rising*] You shall rue this hour, Count de Vernay. Stand aside. That woman is mine. I demand her here, before these citizens, as my lawful wife.

VERNAY. [*Recoiling*] The baron!

BARON. Aye, the Baron de Bellevie, come at last to claim his own.

VERNAY. Go back, good baron, to oblivion. Believe me, 'tis better for you so. You have no right here. This lady is no longer yours to rule. Your vices have freed her from you. The king in mercy has decreed your separation.

BARON. There is no man nor king who can annul the high decree of the holy church. By which I say I claim this woman as my wife.

VERNAY. [*Angrily*] Here is no place for such dispute as this. Let us meet before the cardinal.

BARON. And meantime shall I leave her here in your protection? The protection of a paramour?

VERNAY. [*Drawing his sword furiously*] Cur! Unsay those words! [*Blanche clings to him*]

BARON. Never. For they are the truth. I warn you, sir, that I'll expose your shame in an open court of law, and crush your haughty spirit.

VERNAY. Vile liar. [*Enter Rabble and Ladies*] You dare not try. You know too well the truth. This lady is the ward of my noble mother, Countess de Vernay. She needs no more to save her from the slanders of an outlawed libertine.

BARON. Well then, Count de Vernay, if a court of law cannot give me back my wife, I swear I'll tear her from your house. Aye, take her hence by force.

VERNAY. [*With suppressed fury*] Baron de Bellevie, beware. You little dream of the fierceness of the blood that's burning in my veins. Listen, if you dare to set foot upon my land, I'll kill you as I would a viper in my path.

BARON. A threat! Bear witness all of you, a threat. A threat from the lover of my wife.

VERNAY. Aye, a threat I'll keep. So now begone before I make it good. [*Breaks violently from Blanche*] Defend yourself! [*Music*]

BARON. Bah! I scorn to cross my sword with yours.

VERNAY. [*Wild with rage*] Coward! Out with your sword or die! [*He advances upon the Baron, who draws his sword. The women scream and at that moment De Marsan suddenly appears*]

MARSAN. Hold! I, the Baron de Marsan, Prefect of the Seine, in the name of the King, command you to put up your swords. [*The Count and Baron slowly sheathe their swords as curtain falls on Act I. Rabble at back*]

ACT II.

SCENE: *Inner room in Pierre Michel's. A large chimney to R. Doors R. and L. of it. At door nearest audience and to L. of the chimney, there are two steps with a railing. Upstage near chimney, linen in baskets, the one upon the other. To L. and facing the public, a stairway leading to Rose Michel's room. Underneath this stairway to one side, a door leading to Pierre Michel's wine shop. On the other side a large old-fashioned window. Two doors in flat to L. A cupboard between doors L. A table L.C. An old-fashioned clock in corner. Chairs, stools, etc. As curtain rises, Moulinet is discovered with a dog which he has on the table, training. Music.*

MOUL. [*Seated L. of table. To dog*] Be good now, dear Pollywog, and you shall have a fresh bit of my black bread. There now, sit up. Hold your paws high, so, like a helpless pauper as you are, and put your head o' one side, so. Nay, so, Pollywog, in a sentimental way, like a lovesick girl or boy. There, very good. That's touching. It would draw tears from your guardian's shoe, if she had one. Eh, how's this? Up with your paws, you pup, or I will beat you. And your head—see where it is. What are you thinking of, stupid? Nay, and if you're not more mindful, I'll call you beast. What, is that the way you take my teachings? [*Tapping his paws*] Beast. [*Relenting*] Nay, forgive me. [*Kissing his paws*] I'm a cruel brute. [*Wiping his eyes with his sleeve*] I forget how new you are to this hard business. [*Lifting his finger and reasoning with dog*] But you see, Pollywog, we're here together in this puzzling world. And we must live somehow, and to do that we must have one of two things:

either skill or manners. But dogs and gentlemen live by manners. So I, poor I, must have the skill to teach you, dog, the manners of a gentleman. There, now you understand, perhaps you'll take more to your trade. Come, let us begin again. [*Music. He places dog in position. Pierre enters from shop and calls at him angrily*]

PIERRE. Sneezer! [*Moulinet sneezes with a start*] What are you doing there? [*Coming forward, R.*]

MOUL. Faith, training my family for its support.

PIERRE. Your family? Yes, your own flesh and blood, I vow.

MOUL. Well, I've seen meaner flesh than this o' two legs and in breeches.

PIERRE. Bah! Shut up. [*Crosses L.*] And get out o' this with your trash.

MOUL. [*R.C.*] Yes, kind master.

PIERRE. [*L.C.*] And so I am kind, to let you litter up my house with curs and cats.

MOUL. But how kind would ye be, Master Michel, if these same curs and cats brought ye in no money? Why, with a wise compassion for your own pocket, ye'd let the poor souls starve.

PIERRE. Ah, hold your noise.

MOUL. But as it is, I train these pagan creatures and make good Christians of them, and the holy learning that I give them entertains the crowd that comes to drink in your liquor shop out yonder. That's money in your purse, and so you let us live. [*Bowing*] Kind master. [*Bowing again*] Generous patron o' the poor.

PIERRE. Get out o' this with your vermin. Away with you or I will drive you. [*He advances as though to strike Moulinet. The dog springs at him. Moulinet holds him back*]

MOUL. Now look at that, sweet master, you are rich and strong and yet with all your strength and money, you cannot boast such faithful love as that from anyone. [*Taking up dog and holding it against his cheek*] And then to think that I should strike you. Monster that I am!

PIERRE. [*Furiously*] Will you get out o' this?

MOUL. [*Crossing to L.*] Aye, aye, good master. We go, we go. [*Picks up things and exit by door, L.2.E. Pierre goes to door of his shop and beckons. The Baron de Bellevie enters in cloak, R.H.*]

BARON. [*Throwing off his cloak and looking around*] And so you still keep a tavern, old man?

PIERRE. [*L.C.*] Aye, my lord. We poor must live as best we can.

BARON. [*R.C.*] But you are growing rich.

PIERRE. Rich! Nay, I'm too poor to live, and yet not rich enough to die. Funeral expenses would ruin me.

BARON. [*Laughing*] Always the same old story. How well I remember it five years ago, when I used to borrow of you at an interest of two hundred per cent.

PIERRE. Hush, my lord. Someone will hear you.

BARON. [*Coolly*] So they may easily. You would remind me that I promised secrecy. That was in our bargain or you'd have skinned me still more, usurer. [*Moulinet steals in and hides behind staircase, C.*] Well, old fellow, don't alarm yourself. 'Tis not for money that I look you up again, but for love.

PIERRE. For love?

BARON. Yes, for love. Oh, don't tremble. It is not you I love. Come, let us sit here and drink, while I unfold a scheme, which may rejoice your sordid soul. [*Sitting R. of table. Exit Pierre in shop*]

MOUL. [*Aside*] 'Tis the baron who accosted me this morning. He's here for mischief. 'Tis but right I should be near enough to pinch the devil's nose if he puts it in too far.

PIERRE. [*Reentering, R.H., with wine. Sitting L. of table*] Now, baron, for your scheme.

BARON. Pierre Michel, this time I return to Paris neither to borrow nor to spend, but to make a little fortune, and all in good hard cash.

PIERRE. Ah! And how is that?

BARON. That is my affair. Enough for you to know that tonight within an hour I receive one hundred thousand livres.

PIERRE. One hundred thousand livres?

BARON. Yes, a noble sum. Now, pretend you're poor. What would you do to be richer by five thousand livres before tomorrow morning?

PIERRE. Do? I'd do anything reasonable and honest.

BARON. [*Laughing*] Oh, of course. Reason and honesty are your strong points. But to business. You have a daughter named Louise. She's fair enough to be a lady—what say you to making her a baroness?

PIERRE. And how can I do that?

BARON. Quite simple. Look at me. I'm in my prime, a little used up perhaps with the ravages of war—

PIERRE. And love—

BARON. Yes, and love. I won't deny it. I always was a favorite with womankind. But to be brief. I saw your daughter this very morning. I saw and I was conquered. She's fit to be a queen. I come to ask her for my wife.

PIERRE. Louise your wife? That's impossible. You're married now.

BARON. Yes, married and yet free. Listen. You know my honest openness in vice has separated me forever from my wife—the King has so decreed it. Well, I've been getting poor and poorer. At last I hit upon a plan to put some

money in my purse. I resolved to return here, make an ugly scene beneath De Vernay's windows, threaten scandal and frighten the count into handsome terms with me—

PIERRE. And how did you succeed?

BARON. Beyond my hopes. This afternoon I sent a secret messenger to the count, proposing a settlement of our affairs. I agreed to leave the country and never to return if he would pay me down in cash one hundred thousand livres. I have an appointment at De Vernay's palace for tonight to sign the paper and get my money.

PIERRE. Well, my lord, what then?

BARON. When that is done I have resolved to re-begin my life, and live a sober man. I shall go abroad, assume another name, and settle down to meet old age in peace. Now I shall be rich. Give me your daughter. She shall be known as my wife and honored as a lady.

PIERRE. It is a cunning scheme, my lord, but like others that seek to cheat time in getting riches, it has its risks. Suppose I give you up my daughter, what will you give me to make my conscience easy?

BARON. A salve of gold, my boy, a salve of gold. Five thousand livres safe in hand tonight.

PIERRE. 'Tis not enough. If you would make a lady of my daughter you should make her father rich enough to be a gentleman.

BARON. Rich enough! Bah! I'll wager that you have hidden here somewhere in your floor two hundred thousand livres.

PIERRE. [*In terror*] Silence, my lord. If the rabble heard you they'd tear the walls down about my ears, and then they'd find 'twas all for nothing.

BARON. Well, well, enough. Time flies. Do you accept my offer?

PIERRE. No.

BARON. You forget your daughter would be a baroness.

PIERRE. Nay, my lord, I remember she would be but a baron's plaything.

BARON. Come. Speak out. How much do you demand?

PIERRE. At least double the amount you name.

BARON. Ten thousand livres. That's absurd.

PIERRE. Then let us part, my lord.

BARON. Nay, be reasonable. I'll give you eight.

PIERRE. Ten thousand livres it must be, or none.

BARON. Well, well, you misers always have your way. Ten thousand livres let it be, but I must have the girl this very night. The moment the money's in my hands I'll hasten back and pay you down your share. I must be off tomorrow morning early. I ought to go tonight. That is part of my agree-

ment with the count. So Louise must be on hand to go with me. Well, speak, is it a bargain? [*Up*]

PIERRE. [*Thinking*] Ten thousand livres down. Here tonight. My daughter handed over by tomorrow morning. Let me see, I can send and get her. [*Striking hands with the Baron*] Yes, it is a bargain. The girl shall be at hand.

BARON. Well, then, I'm off, but I'll return before the bell tolls twelve to-night.

PIERRE. Good. Here, go by this door, my lord. [*Showing door downstage, L.2.E.*] For this is private. You'll find the garden gate unbarred. I'll leave it open for you, and when you come again, return this way.

BARON. All right, good father. Au revoir. [*Exit L.2.E.*]

PIERRE. [*Turning, excited and exultant. Crossing to C.*] Glorious. Glorious. Ha, ha! She'll bring more this way in a short hour than in a whole lifetime where she is. I must send for her in haste. [*Calls loudly*] Moulinet! [*Moulinet starts up with sneeze*] Oh, ho! What's this? How did you come there?

MOUL. [*Down R.*] On my legs, master, like any other dog.

PIERRE. Well, be off with you. [*Moulinet crosses to L.*] No, stay. Here. I've an errand for you. Go to Master Bernard's house and say I must have my daughter at once. [*Moulinet crosses to R.*] I need her till tomorrow. See she comes without delay, or I will fetch her and roughly, too. Begone. Make haste. Stay one moment. Where's my wife?

MOUL. [*R.C.*] Not yet returned.

PIERRE. [*L.C.*] Ha! Not back yet! That's strange. Well, away, boy, away. And tell my wife to hasten here and bring my child.

MOUL. Yea, good master. I fly with spavined legs to do your bidding. [*At door, as he goes*] But I'll bring others here he may not be so glad to see. [*Exit quickly, R.1.E.*]

PIERRE. [*Rubbing his hands*] Ten thousand livres. Cash down tonight! Ho! These barons have some value after all. But why is Rose so late? I never knew her to stay so late before. 'Tis time the shop was closed, and still she does not come. Well, no matter, let her stay away, for I'll shut up the shop, lock these doors, and seize the chance to glut my eyes with the sight of all my gold. [*Goes to door of shop and calls*] Jean! Jean!

JEAN. [*Inside*] Aye, aye, master.

PIERRE. Close up the shop at once, it's getting late.

JEAN. [*Inside*] Aye, aye, good master.

PIERRE. At once, you rascal, and then be off to bed.

JEAN. [*Inside*] Aye, aye, kind master.

PIERRE. [*Slamming door and locking it*] So much for that. [*He fastens doors, R. and L.*] And now for a visit to my mistress. Aye, the mistress of my heart by day and night. [*Goes to chimney and moves chest beneath which is a trap, which he lifts up*] Ha! There you are, my loves. [*Pulls out two bags*] How all the world does fight for such as you! The poor work for ye, the rich damn themselves for ye, the judge gets deaf and the jury soft-hearted at the sound of your singing, and even the priest preaches the doctrines you teach him. Ah! You're a mischievous set, my darlings. Ye can do what ye like in this wicked world, but I love ye all the same. Cold as ye are, ye warm my heart. You're wife and children to me. But bless ye, you're not like other children in the world, for the more of ye I get, the better off I am. [*Knock comes to door, R.*] Ha! Who's there?

ROSE. [*Outside*] 'Tis I, Pierre. Let me in.

PIERRE. [*Hiding his gold*] Aye, aye, ye can wait a little: ye don't deserve to be let in at all.

ROSE. Oh, hurry, Pierre, hurry. I have news for ye.

PIERRE. [*Opening the door*] Ah! At last.

ROSE. Yes, with good news. [*Crossing to L.H.*]

PIERRE. [*Calling at door*] Jean, isn't the shop closed yet?

JEAN. [*Inside*] Aye, aye, master. I have just locked the door.

PIERRE. Get ye to bed. [*Slams door and locks it*] And now, woman, where did you come from at such an hour as this?

ROSE. [*Seated, L.C. Soothingly*] There, there, Pierre. Do not scold. 'Tis not the moment. A great joy has come to us. Louise is to marry André, Bernard's son.

PIERRE. [*Starting*] She is! Louise marry André! How's that?

ROSE. Yes. Bernard betrothed them this very day.

PIERRE. [*With mocking laugh*] No! Indeed! And without a word from me.

ROSE. Oh! He's coming in the morning to ask for your consent.

PIERRE. Eh? What? Bernard coming here. Bernard. [*Sneering*] Ah! Then he no longer hates me.

ROSE. Master Bernard never hated you. But then, you know, there are always certain people ready to separate old friends.

PIERRE. Aye, and you are one of the first to do that. I'll wager you've been complaining of me today.

ROSE. You are wrong, Pierre. On the contrary, I made an oath today to Bernard that you were honest.

PIERRE. Then he had a doubt about my honesty?

ROSE. Oh, no! But then honor is everything to him. And so, before giving his son to your daughter, he had the right to know that there was no stain upon her father.

PIERRE. Ah! And your word sufficed to prove it, eh?

ROSE. [*L. of table*] Yes, for he well knew I would not lie, and that if I thought you were dishonest I would have told him so at once.

PIERRE. [*R. of table*] That makes me laugh. And what does he give his son for this marriage?

ROSE. I don't know: he didn't speak of that. Tomorrow he will settle that with you.

PIERRE. You didn't promise any dower for Louise from me, I hope?

ROSE. Well, Pierre, we have our duty as well as he.

PIERRE. Bah! I'm not a lord to dower my daughter. He who marries her must take her for her beauty.

ROSE. Nay, that we have no right to ask.

PIERRE. Yes, we have a right to ask that and more. He who takes Louise must not only take her without dower, but, by Heaven, he must dower me as well! [*Crosses L.*]

ROSE. Oh, Pierre!

PIERRE. Of course. She has a value to me now, but married, all that value would be gone.

ROSE. But who would take her on such terms?

PIERRE. Ha! There's plenty would. Worn out lords and such. [*Beckons Rose forward. She rises*] I've had an offer for her here, this very day. An offer to take her and dower me with ten thousand livres.

ROSE. What! And would you sell your daughter?

PIERRE. Would you have me pay some man to take her?

ROSE. Pierre, you did not take that offer?

PIERRE. You're mistaken. I sealed the bargain on the spot.

ROSE. [*Fiercely*] But you forgot that my consent is necessary.

PIERRE. Ho! We'll find a way to get at that.

ROSE. Never! Never! I have given her to André.

PIERRE. [*Laughing*] Without my word.

ROSE. Oh, misery! Pierre, think of Louise's happiness. It will be certain death to disappoint her in this marriage.

PIERRE. Oh, bah! No one ever died for love. 'Tis hate that kills. So gently, woman, gently, and do not fret me with idle words. 'Tis too late, I say. The bargain's made and I have just sent Moulinet to fetch the girl. She leaves this house a wife tomorrow morning.

ROSE. [*Controlling herself*] And who's to be her husband?

PIERRE. Well, I'll tell you, but you must keep it close. [*Music*] The man who marries her is Gaston de Bellevie, the baron.

ROSE. [*Recoiling in horror*] Gaston de Bellevie! What! And would you sell your child to degradation—give her soul and body to pollution—to that libertine, De Bellevie? [*With supreme resolution*] No, Pierre Michel, that you shall never do.

PIERRE. And who will prevent me?

ROSE. [*Grandly*] I, Rose Michel, a mother.

PIERRE. [*Turns as though to strike her, but is cowed by the expression of her eye. Tableau*] Ha! You're rash! You forget the metal my arm is made of.

ROSE. And you forget the metal a mother's heart is made of. Again I tell you, Pierre Michel, Louise shall never be that baron's mistress.

PIERRE. [*Advances with raised hands, panting like a beast with passion*] Another word and I will tear you limb from limb. [*A loud knock at the inner door, R. Pierre and Rose start*] Beware, woman, how you cross my will, or you may drive me to desperate schemes. [*Rose turns calmly away. Pierre goes to the door*] Who's there?

MOUL. [*At door, R.2.E., outside*] 'Tis I, kind master.

PIERRE. [*Unbolting door*] Come in. [*Moulinet enters alone, R.*] But where's Louise, you traitor?

MOUL. [*Crossing to C.*] A storm is rising, so they said they'd send her in a sedan chair.

PIERRE. Well, go to bed—to bed—and quickly, too. [*While Pierre is bolting door, Moulinet stands aside, anxious to communicate with Rose. Crosses to door, R.1.E.*]

MOUL. Oh, if I could only get a word with her to tell her all. Let me try. [*Wind moans outside. Turns and goes toward Rose, saying in low voice*] Mistress. Mistress. A word with you. [*Rose turns, he draws nearer, looking in turn from Rose to Pierre*] Mistress, take courage.

PIERRE. [*Fiercely*] Moulinet! [*He sneezes violently*] What are you at there?

MOUL. Only sneezing, gentle master.

PIERRE. [*Roughly*] Well, sneeze to bed, or I'll break your bones. [*Exit Moulinet quickly, R.C., under stairs. Pierre turns to Rose, who is in an attitude of deep thought*] Well, woman, what are you thinking of there? Be off to bed with you. [*Crossing to L.H.*]

ROSE. I go to bed, to sleep, while you trade away my child to disgrace and death!

PIERRE. Come, come, I've heard enough of that. To bed, I tell you.

ROSE. [*Going over to him, gently*] Pierre, listen to me. For eighteen years I've clung to you, patient, obedient, devoted. I've tried to make your home a cheerful one. I've nursed you tenderly when ill. I have been a steadfast wife, toiling, slaving, starving to help you and save the money that you love so much. Pierre, as you worship gold, so do I worship my child. She is all the riches that I have. Oh! Then be merciful. I have helped by countless pains to save your treasure. [*Kneeling and caressing his hand*] I beg you here upon my knees to spare me mine.

PIERRE. [*Flinging her to the floor*] Ah! Curse this whining woman! She'll spoil all and rob me of a fortune. [*Thunder in distance. Pierre crosses to C.*]

ROSE. [*Crawling along the ground and clinging desperately to him*] Oh, listen, listen, I beseech you, to the wretched woman grovelling at your feet! Think of all your gold and how you'd feel to lose it. Ah, far greater torture would it be to me, a mother, to lose my child. I have suckled her upon my breast. I have cherished her when sick, have torn her from the very arms of death. Oh! Have mercy, then, upon us both. Do not give her to pollution. Spare her. And save her life by giving her to André, whom she loves. [*Thunder again rumbling in distance*]

PIERRE. [*Suddenly strikes his head and stands like one struck with a great thought. He seems to lose himself in thinking, and speaks aside*] This woman's desperation will foil our plans about Louise. What then? I see a way to get at all his money and spare the child. Ha! It is an awful thought. It makes my blood grow cold. But then the money—all the money—one hundred thousand livres. Ha! It makes me mad.

ROSE. Pierre! Pierre! [*He starts like one from a dream and stares at her*] Oh, take pity. End the anguish of my mother's heart. Answer, will you spare my child?

PIERRE. [*Slowly in an altered voice*] Yes, I will.

ROSE. [*Rising and throwing her arms about him*] Oh, Pierre! My husband! I am a thousand times your slave for this.

PIERRE. [*Unfastening her fingers, coldly*] There, there. Be quiet and go to bed. [*Crosses to L.C.*]

ROSE. [*R.C.*] But, Pierre, will you keep your promise?

PIERRE. Rose Michel, I may be cruel, hard, stingy, but I'm not a coward. Have you ever known me to break a promise?

ROSE. No, Pierre, no. And I'll believe you now. Heaven bless you for your promise. But when Louise comes—

PIERRE. She shall go straight to your room, and in the morning we will both go back to Bernard's house, and give her to his son.

ROSE. Oh, Pierre, Pierre! [*A low knock at door, L2.E.*]

PIERRE. Hush! Listen! [*Knock is repeated*] Hush! Get you to bed quickly. It may be the baron. I have to break my bargain with him. I must be with him here alone. [*He goes to door*] Who's there?

BARON. [*Outside*] 'Tis I, my boy. Let me in quickly.

PIERRE. Aye, aye, one moment. [*As he unbolts door he turns to Rose and motions her to bed*] Come, go! Go! [*Rose goes upstairs, R.U.E. Pierre opens door. Baron comes in, R.U.E.*]

BARON. Ye gods! What a night! [*Takes off cloak and draws near to fire*] Here, old fellow, give me a glass of punch. I am chilled through and wet. [*Exit Rose into her room, R.U.E.*]

PIERRE. All right, my lord, at once. [*Goes to cupboard, L., and prepares glass of punch*]

BARON. Well, all has gone grandly. The count proved a true man. [*Taking note out of his pocket*] This afternoon he sent me this. [*Reading*] "Come to my house tonight at ten, and I will pay you the one hundred thousand livres you demand. Signed, Count de Vernay."

PIERRE. [*Taking down a small bottle out of cupboard*] Was he as good as his word?

BARON. Yes, he was short and sharp with me.

PIERRE. Have you got the money with you safely?

BARON. Yes. Here it is in shining new bank bills. [*Shows a wallet which he taps in triumph*]

PIERRE. Good. [*Pouring from the small bottle into the Baron's glass. Aside*] This will make him sleep soon and soundly. My knife will do the rest.

BARON. [*Petulantly*] Well, what are you at there? Will you ever have my glass of punch prepared?

PIERRE. Yes, my lord, here it is, a good one. Drink it down. It will be sure to give you a dreamless sleep.

BARON. [*Taking glass*] Well, here's to the new Baroness de Bellevie! [*He swallows wine and smacks lips*] Ah! Strong and warming. By the bye, has Louise come yet?

PIERRE. I expect her every moment.

BARON. Good. I'll sit out midnight till she comes.

PIERRE. [*Quickly*] Nay. Go to bed, my lord. I must prepare her for this sudden business, and your presence might spoil all.

BARON. Yes, you're right. I'll go. But be sure to call me early. I promised the count I'd leave tonight, so I must be off with my bride by the coach which leaves at dawn.

PIERRE. Don't fear, my lord. I'll see that all goes well.

BARON. You're wise. [*Showing his wallet*] For the bliss that this contains for you depends upon your promptness. [*Yawning*] I'm getting blind with sleep. [*Rising and staggering*] By the Saints! That punch of yours was heavy: it has sunk into my legs. Help me to bed or I shall drop upon the floor. [*Pierre helps him to his room, L.3.E. Moulinet steals in slowly R.1.E.*]

MOUL. All is still again. I thought I heard the baron's voice. I wonder where they've gone? Doubtless my mistress is in her room sick with fears for her child. I must give her courage. Tell her that Bernard, André, and the prefect are coming with Louise. I must make no noise or I'll bring my cruel master on us. I must stop this treacherous nose of mine. I'll pinch it tight lest it betray me. [*He holds his nose and creeps up the stairs. As he gets to the top, Pierre enters and startles Moulinet, who makes all the motions, but succeeds in smothering his sneeze. He stoops down upon the platform of the stairs and hides*]

PIERRE. Now to take my precaution. Louise is coming. I must do this deed before she gets here. She will come by this private door by the back gate. I'll go and bar it up that I may not be surprised. [*Exit, L.1.E.*]

MOUL. [*Knocking softly at Rose's door*] Mistress! Mistress! A word with you.

ROSE. [*Opening door*] Who's there? Ah! Moulinet. What do you want here?

MOUL. To cheer you, mistress, with good news. When I went to fetch Louise I told them all my master's wicked plans.

ROSE. You told them all?

MOUL. Yes; and Master Bernard posted off a lackey for the prefect and said he'd bring him here with André, and save your child.

ROSE. You are a faithful fellow, Moulinet, but now there is no need that they should come. Pierre has promised to break his hideous bargain and has agreed to give his sanction to Louise's marriage with Master Bernard's son.

MOUL. Ah, indeed! That's very strange.

ROSE. So now to bed. If your master finds you here you'll surely get a beating.

MOUL. Yes, you're right. I'll get to bed. But my room is far away, hidden like a rat's nest in the roof. If you need me, how will you get at me?

ROSE. I shall not need you. Go. Pierre will keep his promise. In that respect he never fails.

MOUL. That's true. He's as honest as he is heartless. Good night. [*Creeps down stairway to his door, Rose watching him safely off. Moulinet pauses before exit and, shaking his head, says*] 'Tis very strange. This promise of my master's puzzles me. If he is growing kind enough to give up gold, even

for the honor of his child, why then the world may sleep in peace, for the devil must be dead. [*Exit quickly. As he does so Pierre enters hastily and bolts the private door, Rose watching in silence from above*]

PIERRE. [*Goes to window and opens it. A view of the river with the reflections of the lights from the houses is seen through the window. Suddenly there comes a vivid flash of lightning followed by thunder. Pierre starts back exclaiming*] Ha! What a fearful night! So much the better. Its noise and darkness serve my purpose. The river, too, is deep and swift beneath this window. It will cover up forever the traces of this hour's work. [*Coming forward to table and taking up candle*] How to do it. They are all asleep. [*Draws knife from his breast and starts for the Baron's room. When he gets to door he hesitates*] What makes me tremble so? Fool! One little blow puts a hundred thousand livres in your store. Bah! I'd sell salvation for the half of it. [*With sudden resolution*] Come, there is no time to lose. [*Exit L.3.E.*]

ROSE. [*Stealing down stairway*] What can he mean? [*Sudden cry and groan heard inside the Baron's room*] Great Heaven! What was that? [*She glides softly over to Baron's room, pushes door softly open, peers in and then with a scream of horror falls fainting to the ground. A slight pause and then Pierre appears in the doorway, ghastly white, and with a bloody knife in one hand, the light in the other*]

PIERRE. What was that I heard? Who was it screamed? [*Coming to Rose's body and starting back*] What! She here? [*Puts candle on table*] I must get her out of this. I'll drag her into the outer shop. [*He stoops over her. She begins to recover her senses. He rises and looks eagerly about him. Rose raises herself on hands. She looks around her, suddenly sees Pierre and starts up with shriek*]

PIERRE. [*With terrible impatience*] What ails you, girl?

ROSE. [*Pointing at Baron's door*] There! There! That man! Wounded! Covered with blood! Murdered!

PIERRE. [*With low, fierce voice*] Hush! Be quiet!

ROSE. [*Pointing to knife in his hand*] Yes, murdered! [*Suddenly bounding upon his throat*] Murdered by you! [*Hissing the words out*]

PIERRE. Silence, fool, or you'll betray me!

ROSE. [*Overcome with emotion, releasing him*] Heavens! Louise's father an assassin! [*Hides her face*]

PIERRE. [*With cold emphasis in her ear*] Yes, Louise's father. Don't forget that. Your daughter's father. You guaranteed my honesty today. Speak now. Tell all. Prevent this marriage and kill your child.

ROSE. Would you seal my lips with my daughter's life? I warn you, I'll denounce you. [*Advancing on him with a terrible face. He recoils, cowed before her*]

PIERRE. Take care, woman! Take care. Or you may drive me mad. [*Raising his knife*]

ROSE. Strike, coward—

PIERRE. [*Clutching her by the throat and bending her back to the ground*] Well, then, rash fool, I'll kill you too. [*He raises his knife to strike her, but is arrested by loud knocks. Louise's voice outside, L.2.E.*]

LOUISE. [*Outside*] Mother! Mother! Open. We are here. All of us. Bernard, André and the prefect. [*Rose and Pierre start back paralyzed. Pause*]

ROSE. [*In a low voice of anguish*] It is Louise, my child.

PIERRE. Yes, your child, who comes with her betrothed to get her death-blow from your lips. [*Crosses to window and flings knife into the river*] There, that trace is gone. The baron's body will soon follow it. [*Knocks and Louise's voice heard again*]

LOUISE. [*Outside*] Mother, mother, open! Let us in! [*Rose is speechless with horror*]

PIERRE. [*Going over to her*] Rose, I go. I am Louise's father. My life and hers are in your hands. I go to let them in. Denounce me if you dare. [*Makes exit. Rose stands like one turned to stone*]

ROSE. Oh, horror! How can I face Louise! Denounce her father, and give her future to disgrace. Oh, God! In mercy give me strength to do my duty. Yes, I am resolved. I will not be the partner in this devil's work. [*Music. Enter Louise, Pierre, Marsan, Bernard and André, L.2.E.*]

LOUISE. 'Mother! Mother! [*Rose presses her in silence to her breast*]

MARSAN. [*Advancing*] Pierre Michel, you know me. I am the Prefect of the Seine. I came because I've heard strange news of your intentions towards your daughter. We have been informed you are about to plunge her into a life of degradation for a sum of money.

PIERRE. He who told you that was a crack-brained fool. Here is the truth, my lord. News came to me this afternoon that my wife was giving away my daughter to Master Bernard's son without a word from me. My heart rebelled against this slight of a father's sacred rights. I sent to have the girl brought here in defiance of them all. While my messenger was gone, Rose returned, explained, and I was satisfied.

MARSAN. And do you now solemnly declare, here before me, that you have no designs upon your daughter's happiness?

PIERRE. None save these, my lord. [*Taking Louise's hand*] I have ten thousand livres put aside, with which I mean to dower this my only child,

and [*Taking André's hand*] give her to this man. [*Music. Joins their hands. As he does so Rose advances and suddenly with a majestic gesture, strikes their hands apart*]

ROSE. [*Wildly*] Hold! [*They all recoil amazed. Rose looks sternly from one to the other, her eyes flash, her breast heaves. Suddenly she sees Louise, who stands with arms outstretched appealingly. As Rose sees her, a look of agony comes into her face. She clutches her own throat. At last, overcome and with a wild cry, she exclaims*] No! No! My child! My child! My mother's love has conquered all the rest! [*She folds her passionately to her breast as the curtain quickly falls*]

ACT III.

SCENE: *An elegant boudoir in De Vernay's palace. Doors, C.F.R. and L. Table, L. Chair, R. De Marsan and Countess playing cards at table, L. De Vernay seated reading, R.*

COUNT. [*R. of table, closing up cards and taking up some lace work*] There, baron, that will do for this afternoon. [*To her son*] What are you reading, Henri?

VERNAY. [*On sofa R.*] The second part of M. Voltaire's *Philosophical Dictionary*, which has just appeared. Do you know, baron, the doctrines taught here are positively frightful?

MARSAN. [*L. of table*] Do you think so?

VERNAY. Yes, when those doctrines dominate France, chaos will come again.

MARSAN. But, my dear count, these revolutionary doctrines are so popular just now, because the noblesse of France abuse their privileges. They are so absorbed in their own pleasure, that they often forget the natural rights of all men to fair play.

VERNAY. But does folly in the upper classes justify madness in the lower?

MARSAN. If it does not justify, still it is sure to breed it.

COUNT. My dear baron, permit me—words like yours should never be spoken anywhere but in your closet, and there only in a whisper.

VERNAY. Precisely. For you know, baron, the King, who is fond of you, does not profess any profound affection for the new theories of the would-be philosopher.

MARSAN. Ah! There you're mistaken. The King does not approve these theories, but he begins, like me, to see why they are cropping out so plenti-

fully, and therefore, sharing my fears for the future, he has charged me with a special mission.

COUNT. I congratulate you, baron. May we know what this mission is?

MARSAN. Certainly, my dear countess. Not a day passes that we do not discover on the highway, at the corners of the streets or in the river, the remains of people murdered by our nobility.

VERNAY. Why do you say by our nobility?

MARSAN. Because, alas, our young noblesse, in the careless expansiveness of their genial natures, boast of their executions—in fact, a night attack upon some poor wretch, whose nose perhaps has offended our delicate sensibilities, is quite the fashion. A lackey steps upon our toes, his awkwardness excites our compassion, we long to undo his disease, and, like all doctors, we must kill or cure. Nothing but surgery suits us. We must prescribe three feet of cold steel, let chance decide where it shall be applied, and nine times out of ten our cure kills. [*Count laughs. De Marsan, pointedly*] And then we laugh at the comical perversity of human nature, which, strange to say, does not appreciate the benevolence of our peculiar school of medical practice.

VERNAY. Oh, pardon. It was not our peculiar practice—but your cynical wit I was laughing at—

COUNT. [*To Baron*] But, my cousin, your mission. What may that be?

MARSAN. My mission, dear countess, is to visit upon these young surgeons of the street a little of their own practice—in other words, I am commissioned by the King to cure these gentlemen by killing them.

COUNT. Killing them? And where? In the streets?

MARSAN. No. Upon the scaffold.

COUNT. What! Our noblesse upon the scaffold!

MARSAN. And why not, countess? If titles shield assassins today, believe me, the time will come when titles will be abolished.

VERNAY. And by what means, pray?

MARSAN. [*Solemnly*] By the providential madness of the poor, my friend. Therefore, in order to preserve the future to our noblesse, the King has determined to punish with an iron hand all assassins, be they plebeian or noble. Henceforth, anyone guilty of murder must pay the full penalty of the law. And anyone suspected of assassination shall go to trial, aye, even to the torture if need be—be he jack or gentleman. The duty of enforcing these commands has devolved upon me.

COUNT. I condole with you, dear baron. Your new duties must be very painful.

MARSAN. Doubtless; but duties in this world, are not a matter of choice, but of destiny, madame, and however terrible they may be, honor bids us face and accept them with courage. [*Goes upstage and takes his hat*]

COUNT. [*Rising and taking C.*] Well, my dear cousin, pray Heaven that none of us may fall into your resolute hands, for I fear that where honor commanded, you would obey without mercy, even to your own blood.

MARSAN. [*Down R. of table, bowing*] Thanks for the compliment, dear countess. I shall try to be worthy of it. I must go now. *Au revoir.*

COUNT. But don't forget that you dine with us today.

MARSAN. My dear countess, I should as soon forget my duty, as your dinner; the charm of the one helps me to support the horrors of the other. [*Kisses her hand and exit, L.*]

VERNAY. [*Impetuously, to his mother*] Ah! Thank Heaven he has gone. I can now ask you what has been torturing me all the morning to suppress. How is Blanche? I mean the baroness? [*Rising*]

COUNT. [*L.C.*] Alas! Poor thing. She still keeps her room—ill. She is slow to recover from the effects of that scandalous scene we had, day before yesterday, with her husband.

VERNAY. [*R.C., between his teeth*] Ah! Would that that bandit were dead!

COUNT. Monsieur! You forget yourself!

VERNAY. Ah! I wish I could forget myself and all the misery I keep pent up in silence here. [*Striking his breast*] I've been trying to forget it for years, but there's no use. I cannot. I must go away. Nothing but flight will save me from folly.

COUNT. What do you mean?

VERNAY. [*Turning and looking at Countess earnestly*] You are a woman and a mother; you know well what I mean. You know that if I wish the Baron de Bellevie's death, it is because I love his wife and would make her mine.

COUNT. [*Sternly*] What! Such words as these from you, my son? Nay. If you will forget yourself, sir, pray remember me. I am the Countess de Vernay.

VERNAY. My mother!

COUNT. And Blanche de Bellevie's guardian. [*Sits, L.C.*]

VERNAY. [*Impatiently*] No matter. I must speak to someone, or what I feel may overwhelm my will and drive me mad. Oh, then let me pour out my heart to you; 'twill help me to be silent where speech would be a crime. For three long years I have fought with my love, but day by day my love has grown stronger and my will weaker to withstand it; and now to know that she, Blanche, so noble, pure and patient, is lying there, suffering from the insults of that man. Ha! The very thought is torture. It sets fire to my blood.

For the sake of her good name I've controlled the passion in my breast, and mastered this arm that aches to send her husband's soul where it rightfully belongs—to its Maker. [*Crosses, R.*]

COUNT. [*L.C., with stern hauteur*] Nay, sir, this is too much. I cannot stay to listen longer. May you remember, by the time we meet again, that you and I were born of gentle blood.

VERNAY. [*Mastering his emotion*] Thanks, madame, for that loyal word. Forgive me. See—I am myself.

COUNT. [*Extending her hand*] And so, once more my son. [*He kisses her hand reverentially. At that moment a Servant appears and announces*]

SERVANT. [*L.2.E.*] Madame, Rose Michel begs a word with you.

COUNT. I will receive her here. [*Exit Servant, L.2.E.*]

VERNAY. I will walk awhile upon the terrace; it will cool my brain and help me to subdue my thoughts.

COUNT. Go, my child, and bear the burden of your suffering with the patient dignity that becomes your race. Remember—"Noblesse oblige." [*He kisses her hand and exit, R. Countess alone*] Ah! It is hard to be stern when one's own heart is breaking with sympathy for sorrow; but I must be stern. If I were to listen patiently, patience would soon turn to tenderness, and breed weakness in us both. No, love like his can only be mastered by pride like mine, and the more he loves, the prouder I must be for his own honor's sake. [*Sits, R.C. Music*]

SERVANT. [*Entering, L.2.E.*] Madame la Comtesse, Rose Michel. [*Servant ushers in Rose and exit. Rose enters, pale and weary*]

COUNT. Ah, Rose, I am glad to see you.

ROSE. [*R.C.*] Thanks, madame. I come to bring the work you gave me. [*Opening basket and taking out some embroidery*] Here it is. I hope it will please madame. [*She gives it. Countess takes it, rises and places it on table*]

COUNT. [*L.C.*] I am glad you have come, Rose, for I have a little wedding present for you. [*Rose turns in surprise*] Oh, I know all; your child is soon to marry Bernard's son. [*Rose bows her head*] Well, no answer. Have I been deceived?

ROSE. [*With a start of fear*] No, madame. No! It is true Louise is to be married. In three months she will be the wife of André.

COUNT. That will be a superb marriage, Rose. She marries into a family renowned for many generations for honesty. It is a family without a stain on any side. It is a great honor to you that they have chosen your daughter.

ROSE. [*Bowing her head with suppressed emotion*] Yes, madame, I know it.

COUNT. [*Crossing to L.*] But I must go and get the little present I spoke of. Wait for me, here, in the chamber of my son. [*Exit L.3.E.*]

ROSE. [*Starting at the words of the Countess*] This the chamber of her son! Ah! Then I can do the duty I came to perform. [*Takes wallet out of her breast, looks at it a moment, and then with a suppressed scream hides it again*] Ha! What was that? Nothing! [*She hides her face with a shudder, then with a sudden resolution crosses to other side of the room*] I must not fear. I must not think. I must act, act, act. [*Pausing and then in voice of pain*] Act? Oh! Act? How? As the accomplice of my husband's crime? But can I denounce the father of my child and dedicate her to shame and death? No, no, no! And that assassin. He knows it, he counts on the strength of my love to weaken the voice of my conscience. And alas! He is right. He is right. Justice, honor, all dwindle into nothing before my passion for my child. But I have done my best to make my husband's crime a little less hideous. I have wrung from him the baron's money. He shan't be thief as well as assassin. I am here to return this money to the man it came from. I dare not put it in his hand, he would ask me where it came from and how I came by it; that would reveal all. But there is his secretary. I will slip it into the drawer, he will never know how it came there, but it will be where it belongs. [*Takes wallet and steals to secretary*] Ha, it is like red-hot iron in my hands. Quick, let me be rid of it. [*She thrusts it in the drawer, and then hurries to the other side of the room with a sigh of relief*] There, it is done. I feel as if a crushing load were taken off my heart. [*Countess enters with a package in her hand*]

COUNT. Here, Rose, take this for your daughter.

ROSE. [*L.C.*] Oh, madame, a jewel. Ah! You are too good, too good.

COUNT. [*R.C.*] No, Rose, we all have a great affection for you and your child, for we all know that you are an honest woman. [*Rose starts and bows her head*] And worthy of recognition for your goodness. Give this to Louise. It brought happiness to me on my marriage day; it will bring happiness to your child.

ROSE. [*Turning and kissing the Countess' hand impetuously*] Oh, madame, madame, you are an angel. Grant me, I pray you, one great boon.

COUNT. Certainly, what is it?

ROSE. That I may bring Louise here, this day, that she may thank you out of her own heart. I am not good enough to thank you.

COUNT. Oh, Rose! Your passion for your child amounts to madness, for you abuse your own brave self in speaking of her.

ROSE. Yes, madame, you are right, my love for Louise is a kind of madness. [*Aside*] May God pity me the more for that. [*Aloud*] Ah, madame, can my child come?

COUNT. Yes, indeed. I shall be charmed to see her sweet face. Go and bring her to me. [*Crosses to R.*]

ROSE. I fly, madame. She shall come as soon as I have dressed her fittingly for such an honor. [*Exit quickly, L.U.E.*]

COUNT. How pale she is! The privations of her wretched life, doubtless. Poor thing. It is a great pleasure to do her a kindness, she feels it so deeply. [*Enter Servant, L.*]

SERVANT. The Baron de Marsan. [*Enter De Marsan hastily, L.*]

MARSAN. [*L. Quickly*] Where is the count?

COUNT. [*R.*] On the terrace.

MARSAN [*Quickly to Servant*] Tell him I must see him here at once. [*Exit Servant, R.3.E.*]

COUNT. [*Surprised*] Well, well, well! What's the matter? I hardly know you—you bring so strange a face to dinner.

MARSAN. [*With constraint*] I crave pardon, dear countess, but I must ask to be excused today. It is impossible for me to dine with you.

COUNT. [*Laughing*] Indeed! Flatterer! I thought my dinner was like your duty—sacred.

MARSAN. And so it is, madame. Only my duty has precedence. It is the imperative nature of that duty that deprives me of the pleasure of your dinner.

COUNT. Then there is nothing to be said. [*Enter Henri, R.*]

MARSAN. [*L.C., to Countess*] Pardon me once more, dear countess, if I am forced to say that a grave affair makes it necessary for me to see your son alone.

VERNAY. [*R., surprised*] See me alone?

COUNT. Oh, you dismiss me *sans ceremonie*. Well, I will take the indignity with resignation. [*Crosses to L., laughing*] I hope you don't suspect my son of what you call street surgery? [*Baron de Marsan starts, bows stiffly and kisses her hand*] I hope Henri will be able to make it your duty to dine with us—and also be able to smooth your solemn face before dinner begins. [*Exit L.3.E.*]

VERNAY. [*R.C. Gaily*] Well, baron, begin. What is this grave affair? Speak. Don't leave me in suspense. Trembling is not a pleasant occupation.

MARSAN. Henri, I have strange news for you. [*De Vernay turns and looks at him*] The Baron de Bellevie is dead.

VERNAY. [*Recoiling*] The Baron de Bellevie is dead! Oh, Heaven, you are merciful! [*Bounding over to De Marsan and grasping his hand*]

MARSAN. [*Putting De Vernay's hand away coldly*] Pardon me, you do not seem to understand—Monsieur de Bellevie has been assassinated.

VERNAY. [*Sobered*] Assassinated?

MARSAN. Yes, and his corpse has just been found in the Seine.

VERNAY. De Bellevie assassinated—how? In a street fight?

MARSAN. No. He is stabbed three times in the back. He did not die in a fair fight; he was murdered in cold blood.

VERNAY. Good Heaven! And by whom?

MARSAN. Henri, at this moment I perform the bitterest duty of my life. The one accused of this murder—[*Hesitates*]

VERNAY. Well, who is accused?

MARSAN. You! The Count de Vernay.

VERNAY. [*Starting*] Come, come, cousin. Pleasantry may go too far.

MARSAN. Henri, this is not pleasantry, it is a solemn fact. You are accused of this murder.

VERNAY. And who dares to accuse me?

MARSAN. Those who found De Bellevie's body. Those who stood by, two days ago, and heard you make a threat to take his life.

VERNAY. Merciful Heaven! Do you mean to say that this is serious?

MARSAN. [*Solemnly*] More than serious, for you are formally accused before me, and I am here not as a friend of the family but as an officer of the law.

VERNAY. [*Holding his head*] Pardon me, you stagger me. My head swims with the suddenness of this blow, my brain begins to burn. Grant me one moment to collect my thoughts. Let me see. Let me see. Night before last the Baron de Bellevie was here in this house—in this very room.

MARSAN. [*Starting*] Do you acknowledge that?

VERNAY. [*Surprised*] Why not?

MARSAN. Do you remember your threat?

VERNAY. Yes. He swore he'd tear his wife from this house by force. I swore that if he made the attempt I'd kill him as a viper in my path.

MARSAN. Well?

VERNAY. He came here, but not to outrage his wife. He came at my request to seal a bargain.

MARSAN. True. A note was found on his body in your hand, asking him to be here at ten o'clock, the night before last. Proceed, and tell me why it was that after threatening his life, you invited the Baron de Bellevie to come to this house and at such an hour.

VERNAY. Why—why—monsieur—pardon me, I would rather not tell you that.

MARSAN. I must know. Upon your frankness to me, our salvation depends.

VERNAY. My salvation? Am I really in danger then?

MARSAN. You are—in danger of death. By the axe, upon the scaffold.

VERNAY. Oh, heavens! This is horrible! What can I say?

MARSAN. Explain at once the presence of De Bellevie here that night.

VERNAY. Well, if I must I will. But it will cost me dearly. He came to sign an agreement with me to leave France forever.

MARSAN. On what terms?

VERNAY. I was to pay him down—cash in hand, one hundred thousand livres.

MARSAN. Have you that agreement?

VERNAY. Yes. It is here, in the drawer of that secretary.

MARSAN. [*With a cry of joy*] Ah! Thank Heaven! This explains all. The money which De Bellevie had upon him, and of which we knew nothing, was the bait of his assassin. The money is gone. He was killed by some robber. Ah! My dear Henri, the evidence against you was terribly strong. He was supposed to be too poor to tempt a bandit. You were known to have a strong motive for putting him out of the way. But now, show me this agreement. That will clear you, and then we need only trace the money to secure the real culprit.

VERNAY. [*Crosses, R.C., going to secretary*] The agreement is here.

MARSAN. Stop—one moment—I must find it with my own hand. [*Going to secretary*] How did you pay the baron?

VERNAY. [*L.C.*] In ten bills of one thousand livres each.

MARSAN. Did you see where he placed the money?

VERNAY. Yes. He placed it in a black leather wallet stamped with his own initials.

MARSAN. Those facts are important; they may help us to secure his assassin. [*He opens drawer of secretary and takes out some papers*] Ah! Here is the agreement all right. [*Goes to shut drawer and suddenly pauses, amazed*] Eh? What's this? [*Music. Takes out Baron's wallet*] A black leather wallet stamped G. de B. [*Sternly*] Count de Vernay, what is this?

VERNAY. [*Looking in amazement at the wallet*] That! That is the very wallet!

MARSAN. [*R.C.*] Ah! You confess. How do you explain its presence here?

VERNAY. [*Appalled*] How can I? [*Passing his hand before his eyes*] This must be a nightmare. It cannot be real.

MARSAN. [*With terrible solemnity*] Count de Vernay, on your explanation of this wallet hangs your life.

VERNAY. [*Starts, looks round him like one in a dream. Suddenly he springs to the door and calls frantically*] Mother! Mother! [*Countess rushes in, followed by Rose and Louise*]

COUNT. [*L.*] Heavens! Why this wild cry from you? Henri, speak! You have terrified us all.

VERNAY. [*C.*] Mother, I am ill, fevered, in delirium. Tell me, is this man truly the Baron de Marsan?

COUNT. Yes, my son, why do you ask?

VERNAY. [*In agony*] Why do I ask? [*Wildly*] Because he comes here to accuse me—Henri, Count de Vernay, of murder.

COUNT. Murder! [*To De Marsan*] Monsieur de Marsan, can this be possible? That you dare to enter here and outrage the honor of this house?

MARSAN. [*R.*] Madame, this hour is worse than death to me, but I must do my duty, cost me what it will. Once more, Count de Vernay, can you explain the presence of this wallet in your secretary? [*Rose sees it and starts. Count de Vernay looks at it a moment*]

VERNAY. [*In a voice hoarse with emotion*] No, I cannot explain it; I am the victim of some malicious plot.

MARSAN. Count, it is to you I appeal in this awful hour, to give your mother courage. Henri, Count de Vernay, in the name of the law, I arrest you for the murder of the Baron de Bellevie. [*Rose starts with a suppressed scream and clings to Louise. Countess recoils in horror*]

COUNT. You! The assassin of that man?

VERNAY. [*Reproachfully*] Mother, can you too suspect me?

COUNT. No, never, Henri, my child. You are innocent. He shall never take you hence.

VERNAY. Courage, mother. A day, an hour, a moment, may bring the proof of my innocence. Courage. Monsieur de Marsan must be true to his mission. He owes obedience to Heaven and his King.

MARSAN. [*Crossing to L.H.A.*] Count de Vernay, follow me. [*Countess clings to her son who turns to follow De Marsan*]

ROSE. [*Choking with emotion*] Stay! [*Tableau. They stand back amazed. Rose's lips move. She tries to speak. Her face becomes convulsed. She sways to and fro for a moment, and then falls insensible to the ground*]

LOUISE. [*With a wild cry, lifting her mother up*] Mother! Mother!

ACT IV.

SCENE: *Same as Act II. Music. Rose discovered seated at table with her face buried in her arms. Pierre enters and watches her.*

PIERRE. [*From shop, R.3E. Aside. Looking at Rose*] Always that way now. Good for nothing. Her gaiety gone; her strength gone; all gone but her

obedience. Yes, since she made me give up the baron's money, she's been more docile than ever, but always with that ghastly face. [*Shuddering*] She makes the place seem like a den of the dead. [*Roughly, to Rose*] Rose! Come! Enough of this moping! Get up!

ROSE. [*L. of table. Rising meekly*] Yes, what shall I do now?

PIERRE. [*R.*] Get to your work!

ROSE. [*L.*] Alas! I am at it every instant, My work is to help you to conceal your crime. My work is to kill an innocent man with my silence. [*Covers her face with her hands*]

PIERRE. [*Roughly*] Bah! Away with these thoughts. Come, girl, smile, smile as you used to do, or everyone will suspect the truth.

ROSE. [*Looking up wearily*] I smile? You expect me to smile?

PIERRE. Of course I do. Haven't I told you so? See that you obey.

ROSE. [*Crossing slowly to R. Gently*] I will do my best, Pierre, I will do my best. [*Moves off slowly towards her room door*]

PIERRE. [*In a gentle voice*] Here, Rose, come back. [*She returns quickly. He takes her hand which she leaves passively in his*] Forgive me. I am a hard man. I have been cruel to you for years. Well, I'm sorry for it—your fidelity now makes me ashamed. Rose, the old love comes back to me.

ROSE. [*Flinging off his hand fiercely*] You would love me, Pierre Michel? Beware! If you see me meek, obedient, forbearing, silent, it is not for your sake but my child's. Be my tyrant and I will be your slave, for only as your slave can I remain your accomplice; but if you dare to love me—to make me your equal—I will revolt—confess all!

PIERRE. Are you mad?

ROSE. Mad? [*With a laugh*] Yes, thank Heaven, I am mad. [*Going over to him and hissing her words in his ear*] If I were not mad, where would you be now? [*Pierre moves off cowed. Rose goes to door, turns and says with quiet decision*] Command, and I will obey. Caress and I will destroy. [*Exit into shop, R.H.*]

PIERRE. [*Looking after her*] That's a woman through and through. Always a puzzle—never to be counted on. Be a brute and they are lambs; be an angel and they are tigers. Well, so be it, since she prefers it so. It suits me well enough. I'd rather be a brute than an angel. It's more in my line. [*Enter Moulinet excitedly, with his dog under his arm*]

MOUL. Mistress! Mistress! [*Seeing Pierre and checking himself*]

PIERRE. [*R.*] Well, what's the matter?

MOUL. I want my mistress.

PIERRE. Won't I do as well? Out with it. There's news in your face. Speak, and tell me what it is.

MOUL. Well, master, the prefect is coming here.

PIERRE. The prefect is coming here? Who told you that?

MOUL. I've just returned from Master Bernard's house, where I have been to summon Mademoiselle Louise.

PIERRE. Heyday! How's this? Louise coming here? Who sent for her?

MOUL. My mistress—her mother.

PIERRE. Ah! I'm glad to know of this. Go on and tell me how you know the prefect's coming here.

MOUL. I saw his clerk awaiting him in the door of the Count de Vernay's palace, and heard him say that he and his master were coming to examine all the household at this inn.

PIERRE. [*Sullenly*] Well, let him come. What do we care?

MOUL. [*In terror*] But, oh, master, they'll find out—

PIERRE. [*Turning on him with a terrible face*] Find out what?

MOUL. [*Trembling and embarrassed*] Ah, a—a [*Sneezing*] How should I know?

PIERRE. [*Aside*] This fellow knows more than I suspected. I must see Rose and give her the news, and set her to make this fellow hold his tongue or he'll betray us all. Luckily he'd eat his own head to please her. [*Aloud*] Moulinet, you're to wait here till your mistress comes. Do you understand?

MOUL. Aye, good master. [*Exit Pierre into shop. Moulinet lets his dog slip to the floor, he still holding him by the string and then says to himself in woe-begone tones*] Yes, they're coming here. They'll question us—examine me, and get at all I know in spite of me. I'm such a fool. That will put them on the track, they'll find out the truth, and then my mistress and Louise will die of shame. Oh, miserable me—why is it that I am? Would that I could say that I were not at all. [*Suddenly seeing his dog*] Or better still, would I were a brute. Oh, Pollywog, had I thy gift of speech I would not fear even an old gossip's inquisition, for thy talking is done with thy tail instead o' thy tongue, and tails are precious, for they neither lie nor tell the truth. When thou art pleased thou dost simply so [*Wagging his finger*], but that says little. When thou art angry, thy tail goes so [*Holding up his finger*], with an upright, stiff and righteous air—as a churchman comes from his prayers. But still this does not tell what angered thee. When thou art cowardly, confused or terrified, then thy tail goes quickly between thy legs. But that betrays nothing but weakness of thine own backbone. Alas! This is not so with tongues. Their motions would undo the devil. Oh, dog! If I were only you, how easy it would be to face their questions. Oh, Pollywog! If I could change my tongue for thy tail, what a blessed poverty of speech I'd have. But no. Though we are brothers by circumstance, alas, we're none by nature. Come, Pollywog, to

thy kennel. [*Exit with dog and comes back immediately. Music. Enter Rose from shop, R. Moulinet goes quickly to her*] Mistress, I have seen your daughter, given her your message, and she will be here soon. But, oh, mistress dear, the prefect is on his way here now.

ROSE. [*R.*] What of that? Why do you turn pale and tremble when you tell me this?

MOUL. Oh, mistress, I'm afraid they'd get at what I know about the murder of the baron.

ROSE. [*Rising in horror*] What you know? [*Going over to him, earnestly*] Tell me, what do you know?

MOUL. Nay, nay! Do not ask me that!

ROSE. But the prefect will make you tell. [*Moulinet covers his face in despair. Gently*] Moulinet, do you love me?

MOUL. Love you, mistress? Love you? When I was starving in the street you picked me up, and took me in even with my cats and curs. When I was stupid you excused me, when I was beaten you consoled me. And now you ask me if I love you? Am I baser than a dog? Mistress, I would be cut up by inches, and buried at your feet to do you good. Nay, for your dear sake I would even part with Pollywog.

ROSE. Then for my sake, tell me all you know.

MOUL. Yes, since you command me. [*Mysteriously, under his breath*] Mistress, I know that the Baron de Bellevie was here at twelve o'clock on the night of the murder. I know that a heavy bundle fell from that window early the next morning. I know that in there, under the bed on the floor of yonder room, there is blood. [*Rose screams. He falls on his knees and catches her hand*] Oh, mistress, forgive me! Forgive me!

LOUISE. [*Outside, R.H.*] Nay, André, wait for me here. I will be back soon.

ROSE. [*Quickly, to Moulinet, who rises*] Moulinet, on your life, be silent. Not a hint of what you know to her.

MOUL. Trust me, not a word.

ROSE. I must see you again later. Go now quickly. [*Exit Moulinet, L.2.E., as Louise and Pierre enter, R.3.E.*]

LOUISE. [*Going to Rose*] Well, dear mother, here I am.

ROSE. My child! [*Embraces her*]

LOUISE. [*Gaily*] And I have news for you—good news for you. Master Bernard has decided to have the feast of our betrothal tomorrow at his house and you and father are both to be there.

ROSE. [*Turning away in pain*] Ah!

PIERRE. [*Aside*] Good! This will make her firm before the prefect.

LOUISE. Oh, mother! Have you no word of joy at this good news?

ROSE. [*Crosses to Pierre. To Pierre*] Go, leave us. I must speak with her alone.

PIERRE. [*Going out at door*] What does she mean to do? Well, no matter; I'll listen and find out. [*Exit, L.D.2.E.*]

ROSE. [*R.C. Goes to Louise, takes her hands and looks earnestly in her face*] Louise, look in my eyes. Do you love André?

LOUISE. [*Kneeling in front of her, embarrassed*] Why, mother, what a question; you know I do.

ROSE. But I do not know how much you love him; that I must know, now, today, this moment. [*Louise looks up surprised. Sits on stool, L. of Rose*] Louise, suppose something should happen suddenly to prevent your marriage?

LOUISE. [*Staggering*] Ah, mother, what do you mean?

ROSE. [*Catching her*] There, there! I did not say anything had happened. I only said 'suppose.' Suppose I should come to you and say, "My child, you must break with André—for his own sake?" What would you reply?

LOUISE. [*With pain*] What would I reply? Ah! How can I tell? I would say, "Kill me. Bury me. Have mercy. Hide me with my shame and grief within a grave." [*In Rose's arms*]

ROSE. My child, be quiet—calm—like me; I am calm and Heaven knows the bitter, bitter anguish in my heart. Listen, at your age we always think our love eternal—to lose the one beloved seems certain death, but it is not so—life lasts and love passes when those we love are gone forever.

LOUISE. [*In a voice faint with pain*] Oh, mother, you make my heart grow sick. Is all life, then, a miserable cheat?

ROSE. Oh, my pure and trusting child. These words of mine are cruel. But I must know the truth. You must face the worst. There, sit here close by me. [*Louise in her arms*] Come closer—there, so now be brave, and follow with your thoughts. Suppose that something parted you from André—nay, do not tremble so, my precious one, or you will take from me my strength. Come, courage; and imagine that a year has gone—yes, five—your past life is like a far-off dream. Dear old time, with pleasant hand, has healed your wounded heart. You are gay again—you laugh to think that you once wished to die. You meet another man, he's handsome, kind, and brave. You love him, take him for a mate and—

LOUISE. [*L.C. Springing from her with a cry*] No more—no more! I cannot bear it! [*Rose bows her head with groans. Louise kneels at her feet and puts her arms around her*] Oh, mother! Mother! Why this misery? You tor-

ture me. You fill me full of terrors. Is there anything to part me from my love? Tell me quickly—I suffocate with fear!

ROSE. [*Pressing Louise's head against her breast*] Come close, as when you were a baby on my breast, and needed but a mother's earnest love. Come closer. So. And listen once again. Darling, for years I've toiled till my finger-ends were sore; for years I've borne blows upon my back. I have starved, slaved, ground my very life away, and all for what?—that I might hold you to my heart twice every year. Such, my child, is the enduring power of a mother's love. Well, child, much as I have loved you—yes, and with my love now flooding all my soul till it seems as though my breast would burst before its awful tides—[*Louise crosses slowly in front to R.*] still I say, if need be, I could part with you forever, and still live.

LOUISE. You could give me up and still live on?

ROSE. [*Aside*] I lie even to my own child. [*Aloud*] Yes, for your sake I could part with you forever. Could you not do so for André?

LOUISE. [*R.C. Starting up wildly*] Oh! I can bear no more. Mother, speak—speak quickly—must I part from André?

ROSE. [*L.C., with sudden resolution, rising*] Yes, my child. You must. [*Louise starts as though she were stabbed, stares stonily a moment, closes her eyes, sways and falls insensible, her head to L.H. Rose, with a wild cry*] My child! My child! I have killed her. [*Pierre enters and stands in background, watching her as she croons over the child in her lap*] Louise, my darling! Look up! Look up! [*Louise opens her eyes, Rose hugs her to her breast*] Ah! There, you have come back to me. Oh, thanks, my precious one. Thanks, I am a cruel fiend to torture you. Look up. Be happy. It is nothing now. 'Tis past forever. I was but testing your girlish love. [*She raises her up*]

LOUISE. [*As she rises*] Testing my love! Is that all, mother?

ROSE. [*R.C.*] Yes, that is all, my child.

LOUISE. [*L.C.*] And I need not give up André?

ROSE. No, darling, nothing shall part you now. [*Exit Pierre, with gesture of joy, L.2.E.*]

LOUISE. [*Sobbing on her mother's shoulder*] Oh! I am so happy! So happy! [*Looking up and taking her mother's hand*] Ah, mother, you know more than I do of other things, but I know most about my own love, and I know it would kill me if I lost André.

ROSE. There, now, go back to him where he is waiting for you. Go! Take him to my workroom in the other wing. I will join you soon. [*She leads her to shop door, R.U.E. Louise pauses. Looks at her mother a moment. They embrace passionately. Then exit Louise. Rose alone*] Shall I be the one to kill her? Can I drag my child from the altar to the tomb? Can I, a mother, do

this? No! Never! Beasts kill those who would harm their young; have I less maternity than a beast? No! I will not kill those who would destroy my child, but I must let those die who demand her death. Let Heaven curse me if it will, but never shall my lips betray the future of my child. [*Enter Moulinet, hastily, R.3.E.*]

MOUL. Mistress! Mistress! I see the prefect's carriage coming down the street followed by a howling mob.

ROSE. Moulinet, come here. [*Moulinet approaches*] My boy, you say you love me. I believe you. I will trust you. Listen. My life, the life of Louise, my child, depend upon your courage, your calmness and discretion. Make me a promise.

MOUL. I will. I'll do anything, be anything, in your service.

ROSE. Well, then, promise me that when you are examined by the prefect you will reveal no knowledge of the baron's murder.

MOUL. I promise. From this moment, memory is dead. I'm a gibbering idiot. [*Distant murmurs*]

ROSE. Thanks, oh, thanks! [*Distant murmurs*] Hark! What is that?

MOUL. It is the rabble following the prefect's carriage. [*Distant cries of "Down with the Count de Vernay!"*] Go, mistress! Go to your daughter. She is in your workroom. Go! They are coming. I will let you know if you are needed. [*Cries nearer, L.U.E.*]

ROSE. You are right, I will go to Louise. She will give me strength to meet this awful hour. [*Exit. Cries come nearer. Moulinet goes to door leading into shop and listens*]

MOUL. They are at the door.

MARSAN. [*Outside, sternly*] Guards, keep back this mob. [*Murmurs die away. Cries of anger and derision from mob*] Open, in the name of the King!

MOUL. Oh, my heart is in my heels. If I only dared, how I could run! [*Knocks at the door. Moulinet opens it. De Marsan enters, followed by the Countess, a Sheriff's Clerk and four Guards*]

MARSAN. [*To Guards*] Stand here, and guard the door. [*Turning to Moulinet*] Where is Pierre Michel, the master of this house?

MOUL. [*Stammering with fear*] Wi—wi—within, my lord.

MARSAN. Go tell him that the Prefect of the Seine is here, and in the King's name demands his presence.

MOUL. [*Going*] Ay—y—y-e, my lord.

MARSAN. Stay! Return with your master. I shall want you as well.

MOUL. [*With increased horror*] Ay—y-e, my good lord. [*Exit, L.D.*]

MARSAN. [*C. To Countess*] My dear countess, be seated here. Are you not terribly shaken by the cries of that mob?

COUNT. [*R.C., sitting*] No, baron; the cries of "Down with the Count de Vernay" but roused the mother in me. To save my son we must find the real assassin of the Baron de Bellevie. To find that assassin I would follow you to the lowest hovel in France, and face the jeers of the foulest boors.

MARSAN. You are a noble woman.

COUNT. Nay, say I am a mother.

MARSAN. Madame, I believe the Count de Vernay innocent. To find the real culprit I shall stop at nothing. That is why I bring you here. The conduct of Rose Michel upon the arrest of your son, was very suspicious. Besides this, the Baron de Bellevie was the one to whom her husband was said to be about to sell her child. There is something wrong here, and I am resolved to ferret it out, even if it necessitates the use of the rack.

COUNT. Thanks, my friend. I know my son is innocent. I also know that you are just, energetic, resolute. The honor of my ancient house is safe in your hands. [*Enter Pierre and Moulinet, 2.L.D.*]

MARSAN. [*To Sheriff's Clerk*] Prepare to make your notes. Ah! Here comes our man.

PIERRE. My lord, you have sent for me. I am at your service.

MARSAN. I am here to question you in regard to the movements of the Baron de Bellevie. [*Pierre bows*] Your name?

PIERRE. Jean Pierre Michel, innkeeper. [*Clerk writes*]

MARSAN. I have information showing that the Baron de Bellevie was here at this house on the day of his disappearance, previous to his visit to the Count de Vernay. Is my information correct?

PIERRE. It is, my lord. The baron came here to tell me that he was about to receive a large sum of money, and to see if he could persuade me to sell my girl to him.

MARSAN. Ah! You acknowledge that there was talk of such a thing between you.

PIERRE. I acknowledge, my lord, that the baron was base enough to propose the sale—but I was quick to resent his proposition.

MARSAN. What followed?

PIERRE. We quarrelled.

MARSAN. Ah! You quarrelled—what about?

PIERRE. The baron grew angry at my refusal, and began insulting me about my child. Said it was none of mine—that even Rose did not regard me as its father. This angered me. I asked for proof of what he said. He told me then that my wife had betrothed Louise to André, Bernard's son, that very

day. Enraged at this neglect of me and my consent, I hurried off this boy to bring my daughter here—and his distorted tale brought Master Bernard and yourself at midnight to this house.

MARSAN. [*To Countess*] This is a plausible story. It explains much that was dark to me before. [*To Pierre*] When the baron was here, did he say where he was to get his money?

PIERRE. He did, my lord. He showed me a note from the Count de Vernay, inviting him to go to his palace at ten and get the money. He left me to keep the appointment.

MARSAN. Did he promise to return?

PIERRE. No, my lord. He said it was part of his agreement with the count that he should leave Paris that very night.

MARSAN. [*To Countess*] That is true. The agreement expressly binds him to do that. I find this fellow's reputation for honesty is excellent. Perhaps I'm on the wrong track. However, we'll go on. I'll examine the servant. [*To Pierre*] That is enough at present. Stand aside. [*To Moulinet*] Now, boy, come here. [*Moulinet approaches*] What is your name? [*Moulinet gasps like a fish out of water*] Well, what's the matter with you?

MOUL. Please, good lord, I'm trying to get my breath.

MARSAN. Haven't you breath enough to tell your name?

MOUL. No, my lord, it is so long.

MARSAN. [*Sternly*] Come, boy, we trifle with time—your name at once.

MOUL. [*After a gasp or two, begins*] My name is Jean, Jacques, George, Joseph, Socrates, Caesar, Herodotus, Baboche—

MARSAN. [*Smiling*] When your master wants you does he cry out all those names?

MOUL. Oh, no, my lord.

MARSAN. Then how does he summon you?

MOUL. He calls out [*Imitating Pierre*] "Sneezer!" and I come in haste.

MARSAN. Enough of names. And your occupation?

MOUL. By nature, poet: by circumstances, a pauper.

MARSAN. Now tell us, fellow, did you know the Baron de Bellevie?

MOUL. Well, yes, and no. I did not know him as a lackey knows his lord, but still I knew him as a human creature—that is to say, a knave.

MARSAN. Talk less, and answer more precisely. Did you see him on the night of the murder?

MOUL. Yes, my lord, I saw him and heard him, too.

MARSAN. At what time of night did you hear him or see him last?

MOUL. I heard him just before the prison bell tolled twelve. [*Countess starts up. De Marsan speaks quickly*]

MARSAN. [*Rising, eagerly*] Near midnight, boy? Speak and tell us where? [*Moulinet pauses in horror. De Marsan continues sternly*] Speak, fellow, and to the point.

MOUL. [*Stammering*] I—I—I saw him—

MARSAN. [*Furiously*] Well, saw him when and where?

MOUL. [*With sudden cunning*] At midnight, in my dreams.

MARSAN. [*Severely*] In your dreams! [*Sitting again*]

MOUL. Yes, my lord: his gentle spirit haunted me all night, and so you see he must have died before I went to bed.

MARSAN. [*With terrible emphasis*] Boy, where's your mistress?

MOUL. Sick, my lord, in bed.

MARSAN. Then rouse her and bring her here at once.

MOUL. [*Forgetting and pleading*] Nay, nay, my lord, have mercy. You will kill her!

MARSAN. [*Eyeing Moulinet with a terrible look*] Kill her! [*Moulinet cowers in silence. De Marsan with a commanding gesture*] Go, boy, and bid your mistress come without delay!

MOUL. [*Running in terror*] Ay—y—y-e, my lord. [*Exit, R.D.I.E.*]

PIERRE. [*Advancing nervously*] My lord, don't mind that fool. He's half simple—half insane, he knows not what he says.

MARSAN. [*To Pierre*] Go and see that your wife comes here alone. [*Rises*] Pierre Michel, mark me, alone. [*Pierre bows silently and exit R.D.I.E. De Marsan turns to Countess*] Take courage, countess, we are on the right track—there is some concealment here, and we will find it out, by fair means if possible—by force if necessary.

COUNT. My dear baron, my heart grows lighter at these words. There is a strange conviction in my soul that none of my kin will ever fill a felon's grave. [*Music. De Marsan takes stage, L.*]

ROSE. [*Enters, pale but calm*] My lord, I am here at your command. [*Kisses the Countess' hand*] Ah, madame, my heart is breaking for you.

COUNT. Thanks, Rose, for your sympathy; may it prompt you to help me if you can.

MARSAN. Advance, madame. Your name, please.

ROSE. [*Crosses to C.*] Madelaine Rose Michel, née Dumont.

MARSAN. Rose Michel, the weight of a terrible accusation has fallen on this lady's son—the shadow of the scaffold rests upon his innocence; then I invoke you, in the name of the King and in mercy to this mother's heart, to speak.

ROSE. [*Impetuously*] Ah, I know that he is innocent! Innocent! For I know—[*Checking herself in terror*]

MARSAN. [*Quickly*] Well—you know—know what?

ROSE. [*Embarrassed*] Why, my lord, I know—I know, as you do—that the Count de Vernay could never be guilty of this crime.

MARSAN. [*Advancing on her sternly*] Nay, woman, you know something more, you are concealing what you know.

ROSE. [*Recoiling in fear*] No, no, my lord. Why do you say that?

MARSAN. Your pallor, your agitation, your trembling limbs, your restless eyes and broken sentences all show me there is something you withhold from us.

ROSE. My lord, I'm ill—a little wandering in my head—what I do or say means nothing.

COUNT. Oh, Rose, if you know anything that may save my son, I pray you speak. You are a mother—you can feel for me. [*Rose groans in agony*] Then speak, I beg, I beseech you in the name of justice, in the sacred name of your own child, Louise, I implore you to speak!

ROSE. Is it in Louise's name—dearest of all else to me—you beg me speak? [*With sudden self-control*] Then listen: this is all I have to say. [*They advance expectantly. Rose continues in a voice firm but earnest with emotion*] I would give my heart's blood—yes, I would suffer any torment that could save your son. I know in my own soul that he is guiltless, but—but—I can tell you nothing that can prove his innocence. [*Countess and Prefect recoil in disappointment*]

MARSAN. [*Sternly*] Rose Michel, your actions belie your words. Beware, I cannot be deceived. I say again that you know facts you dread to tell. Beware. If no appeals can touch you—if kindness cannot make you speak the truth, I warn you then that cruelty shall do its worst to wring it from you. Once more and for the last time—Will you speak and tell us all you know? [*Music*]

ROSE. [*With gentle firmness*] My lord, do with me what you will, but I can tell you nothing.

MARSAN. [*Motioning to Soldiers*] Guards, do your duty. [*Guards seize Rose, one on each side. De Marsan says with terrible solemnity*] Rose Michel, you have defied God and the King; to wrest the truth from your faithless lips I summon all the powers of the law and condemn you to the question—on the rack. [*Countess shrieks and rushes towards Rose. De Marsan interposes sternly. Rose stares into space before her. Curtain, as Countess screams*]

ACT V.

SCENE: *A gallery of the prison of the Little Chatelet. In the background a large opening upon a terrace overlooking the River. In the distance a view of Paris, grand entrance to L. To L., back, a little door. To R., in front, a door with a large lock. R., another little door. A table covered with tapestry. R. and L., chairs, stools, etc. As curtain rises, two Sentinels are discovered pacing the terrace, and the Jailer locking the great door, R. Enter Officer of the Guard going the rounds and followed by four Guards. Enter Turnkey, R.*

OFF. [*To Turnkey*] Anything new?

TURN. [*R.*] Nothing. They are making ready for the execution of the Count de Vernay. The priests [*Pointing to door, R.*] have just left him at his prayers.

OFF. When does he die?

TURN. At dawn tomorrow. 'Tis now ten—he has but six hours of life.

OFF. [*Taking off his hat*] Peace be to his soul! [*Going off with Guards, L.*]

TURN. Amen! [*Exeunt Guards. Sentinel goes off, R.*]

MARSAN. [*Enters, L.D. To Turnkey*] Are Master Bernard and his son still waiting for an audience with me?

TURN. [*Going*] I will see, my lord. [*Going up*]

MARSAN. If the Countess de Vernay comes, admit her instantly. [*Turnkey bows and exit, L.3.E. Alone, R.C.*] Everything has failed us. Rose Michel bore her torture without a murmur till she fainted. It was no use. Her iron will sustained her to the bitter end. My poor Henri has been tried, found guilty and sentenced to the axe, and is to die at dawn. Ah! It is terrible. I am sure of his innocence as my own, and yet the proof seems overwhelming. Only one hope now remains—the clemency of the King. If that fails us, all means of saving him are gone—but one—and that I cannot bear to think of. [*Enter Countess hastily, in despair, L.U.E.*]

COUNT. My friend! My friend! The King is merciless. He says my child must die. The proofs are far too strong. He must die—die an infamous example to the noblesse of the day. Oh, my friend! Despair drives me mad. [*Crosses to R.*]

MARSAN. [*L. Taking her hand*] There, courage, madame, courage. All hope is not yet gone.

COUNT. [*R., turning with a cry of joy*] What? Is there still a way to save him?

MARSAN. [*Mysteriously*] Yes, my friend, one, if you are calm and cautious.

COUNT. Trust me. I have nerve enough to face a horde of fiends with calmness in the service of my son.

MARSAN. Then he shall be saved. But it must be at awful risk to me.

COUNT. What do you mean?

MARSAN. I mean that he must escape.

COUNT. Escape? And how?

MARSAN. Trust that to me. I have my plan. [*Enter Turnkey, L.3.E.*] But silence! The turnkey!

TURN. My lord, Master Bernard and his son await without. [*Sentinel crosses from R. to L.*]

MARSAN. Show them in. Stay—first conduct this lady to my private waiting room. [*Countess crosses. Turnkey shows her out, L.3.E. Enter Bernard and André, L.H. gateway. To Bernard*] Well, Master Bernard, you have come for Rose Michel and her daughter, I suppose?

BERN. [*C.*] Yes, my lord, we are here to take them home where we shall try to compensate both for the cruel trials they have endured here.

MARSAN. [*R.*] Cruel trials, Master Bernard? Cruelty is kindness, sir, where justice is at stake.

BERN. My lord, we are not here to argue or complain, we come to ask if the mother of my son's affianced wife is strong enough to go with us. We have been here all day.

MARSAN. Rose Michel, thanks to her daughter's care, is strong enough to go with you. [*To Turnkey*] Show in Rose Michel. [*Turnkey unlocks great door, R., and goes in. De Marsan rises and advances*] Master Bernard, you can see your friend, but she cannot go with you at present.

ANDRÉ. My lord, a little mercy augments the dignity of justice. Has your victim not yet suffered enough?

MARSAN. [*Crosses to C. Sternly*] Young man, rule your tongue!

ANDRÉ. [*L.H., passionately*] My lord—

MARSAN. [*C.*] The fire of youth, my friend, is good in love or war, but not in argument. Learn that the majesty of the law must be respected. Justice has no victims, and justice must not be accused by beardless youths.

ANDRÉ. [*Controlling himself*] My lord, forgive me. I was wrong. [*Music. Enter Rose and Louise, Rose pale and thin, leaning on Louise and the Turnkey; Bernard and André going to her side*] My mother!

BERN. My dear Rose!

MARSAN. Be seated here. [*They assist her towards a chair*]

ROSE. [*With a wan smile*] Nay, let me go alone. [*She shakes them off*] See, I am strong once more. [*She walks to the chair slowly and sits. Bernard and André are about to approach, when De Marsan interposes*]

MARSAN. Nay, not yet. [*To Turnkey*] Turnkey, show these friends to the public waiting room without. [*Cross to R.*]

BERN. [*R.C. Sternly*] May we not have a moment's speech with her, my lord?

MARSAN. [*Coldly*] No, not yet. [*To Louise*] You, child, must follow your friends.

LOUISE. I? Leave my mother again? Oh, my lord, have pity.

MARSAN. Aye, far more for you than your mother has for others. You must go. [*Sentinel crosses from L. to R.*]

ROSE. [*To Louise, kissing her*] There, darling, go, and have no fears for me. [*Louise leaves her reluctantly and exit with Bernard and the Turnkey. The click of hammers at work is heard. De Marsan pauses up C. and listens. Crossing behind to L.C.*]

MARSAN. [*Down L.H.*] Hark! Do you hear that sound?

ROSE. [*C. Seated*] Yes, my lord—

MARSAN. [*L.C.*] Do you know what it means?

ROSE. No, my lord.

MARSAN. It means that in yonder public square, men are at work upon—
[*He pauses*]

ROSE. Well, my lord, at work—on what?

MARSAN. A scaffold.

ROSE. [*With a start, looking into his face*] A scaffold! For whom?

MARSAN. For the Count de Vernay.

ROSE. [*Sinking on her knees*] Ah, mercy! [*Falling at his feet*] Mercy! Would you kill an innocent man?

MARSAN. [*Lifting her up and placing her back silently in her chair*] Rose Michel, at dawn tomorrow the Count de Vernay dies.

ROSE. [*Covering her face and moaning*] Ah, Heaven!

MARSAN. There is but one hope of saving him, and only one person who can realize that hope—yourself.

ROSE. Oh! Tell me how, my lord!

MARSAN. Speak and tell all you know. Think, woman, that your own child might be like him, face to face with disgrace and death.

ROSE. True, my lord. [*Setting her teeth*] I have not one word to say.

MARSAN. Ah! You have no heart. No pity. You are a miserable wretch.

ROSE. [*Bowing her head*] Yes, a miserable wretch.

MARSAN. Since no prayers can touch you—no sense of duty rouse you—no torture force you to do the right, the right itself must bend before the wrong. Since you will not give way, I must. I cannot see Henri, Count de Vernay, dear as one of my own boys to me, I cannot see him innocent, sacri-

ficed a martyr at yonder block. No, my heart carries away my conscience. I surrender a long career of devotion to duty—yes, surrender it all—to my love for him, and for innocence betrayed.

ROSE. What do you mean, my lord?

MARSAN. I mean that your silence forces me to commit a crime. Rose Michel, can I count on your courage to save my victim?

ROSE. Great Heaven! Try me! Take all the blood in my veins—make but a single sign! Take even my life!

MARSAN. There is but one way to save the count. He must escape.

ROSE. Escape?

MARSAN. Yes. And to you alone I look for assistance.

ROSE. [*Rising, with a cry of joy*] My lord, command me. I will be a willing slave.

MARSAN. Hush! Be quiet! We have no time to spare, and we must use the greatest caution. Listen. I know that somewhere on the floor of this room there exists a tile, which covers a secret passage. By that passage the Count de Vernay might escape, if we could only find the spring that opens it.

ROSE. [*Feverishly*] Ah! I will find it, my lord. I will find it.

MARSAN. Yes, but when found to make it work will need strength and above all, cunning.

ROSE. Cunning I have. Strength I will try to find. [*Business; looking up*]

MARSAN. No, we must have a strong man in our confidence.

ROSE. I know the man. Pierre Michel, my husband.

MARSAN. Do you think you could find him at once and bring him here?

ROSE. Yes, at this hour he is always at his house.

MARSAN. How long would it take you to find him and return?

ROSE. One half hour.

MARSAN. Are you strong enough to go alone?

ROSE. Ah! Do not fear. In such a service Heaven will gift me with the strength. See, my nerves and flesh are iron. [*She walks with nervous vehemence to the door, crosses to L.*]

MARSAN. [*R.C.*] Rose Michel, I will keep your child as hostage. You shall go. [*Sentinel crosses from R. to L.*]

ROSE. [*Covering his hands with kisses*] Oh, thanks, my lord. Thanks a thousand times. [*De Marsan whistles. Turnkey enters, R.I.E.*]

MARSAN. [*Goes over to Rose and appears to be giving her private instructions. To Turnkey*] Show this woman out by the private door of the prison, and give orders to have her admitted instantly on her return. Then summon here the Countess de Vernay. [*Turnkey bows and exit. Count enters, R.*]

Baron turns to Count and they clasp hands] My child, these are awful moments.

VERNAY. On the faith of a gentleman, my friend, I believe it is you who suffer most. But my mother?

MARSAN. Has returned from the King—her prayers were fruitless.

VERNAY. Well, so be it. I am prepared: with the help of God and the consciousness of innocence, I can meet my fate with the fearless dignity that becomes my race.

MARSAN. Henri, I have tried every legal means at my command to save you—all has failed—one way remains, but a lawless one—you must escape, and fly from France.

VERNAY. Escape! Fly from France! Never! That would be to own myself assassin. A felon's death is bad enough. A felon's flight is worse. [*Countess enters*] Ah! My mother! [*They embrace*]

MARSAN. Your son refuses to be saved.

COUNT. I was there and heard it all. My son, it is not your life alone which you should think of now, but the honor of our name. No De Vernay ever died an ignominious death. You must fly now, or at dawn in the public square all Paris will be witness to your degraded fate. Remember the Count de Horn.

VERNAY. He was guilty.

COUNT. And so will you be in the eyes of all the world unless you escape and live to find the real assassin of De Bellevie. Oh, my son, in exchange for a spotless name which I have given you, as the price of years of tenderness, would you leave to your mother and her family the legacy of an ignoble death? [*He turns away, struggling with emotion*] Is this all your answer? Well, so be it. I will go, but before your death bell tolls, I will be dead, dead upon the threshold of your prison.

VERNAY. [*Turning in agony to his mother*] No, no, mother! Have your way. I am yours. Do with me what you will.

COUNT. My son! My well-beloved son! [*They embrace, then she turns to De Marsan*] Now what must he do?

MARSAN. Nothing but wait in his cell with you for Rose Michel. She is charged with his escape, she knows all that is to be done—you have only to follow her directions. She will call you when the hour comes. Go! [*Enter Turnkey, L.U.E. Sentinel crosses from R. to L.*]

TURN. My lord, there is a crazy pauper at the door demands an audience. He comes from Rose Michel.

MARSAN. Admit him. [*Exit Turnkey. They make exit into cell, R.3.E. Enter Turnkey, who ushers in Moulinet, who carries a big bag with something in his hands*] What news from Rose Michel?

MOUL. [*Stammering*] The—th—this, my lord. [*Handing note and then turning upstage as De Marsan reads*]

MARSAN. [*Reading*] “My lord, I am delayed ten minutes; my husband has promised to see the count safely out of France. He has gone to get disguises for them both. Do not fear, we shall be with you soon. Your slave, Rose Michel.” Good, all goes well. [*With sudden emphasis to Moulinet*] Sirrah!

MOUL. [*Turning with a sneeze*] Good lord!

MARSAN. You may go and tell your master’s daughter and her friends that in an hour’s time your mistress will be free to join them.

MOUL. B—b—but where will I find them all, my lord?

MARSAN. In the waiting room. [*Moulinet going, then stopping and coming back to De Marsan, embarrassed, he gasps*] Well, what now?

MOUL. My l—l—lord, a w—word wi—with you. [*Getting breath and courage*] My lord, before I go I must do my duty to my feelings. I am rich in nothing but love; in that I am a Croesus. You have let my mistress go. She’s come back to us alive. Oh, sir, believe me, my gratitude is great. I love you, yes, my lord, I love you, and I long to make you some return for giving me my mistress back again. My fortune, sir, is my affection, ’tis all I have to offer. [*Kneeling and holding out bag in his hand*] Here, sir, in this bag lies the biggest portion of my heart. I lay it at your feet, in the lovely living form of fourteen new-born pups. [*Opening bag*] Behold! My lord, ’tis all I have. A wholesome mixture of three litters of noble new-born curs.

MARSAN. [*Aside*] Poor crazy loon! I pity his good heart. [*Aloud*] Rise, my boy, and many thanks. Keep your litters. You shall raise them carefully for me, and I will see that you have the means to do your curs full justice.

MOUL. [*Overcome*] Oh, my lord, my lord! I and my cats, dogs, rats and weazels are yours to love and keep forever.

MARSAN. Now, begone.

MOUL. We fly to do your bidding, sir. [*As he goes, L.3.E.*] At last, oh fate, you sent a brave protector to that faithful poet and his puppies. [*Exit quickly, L.3.E. Prison bell tolls twelve. Sentry crosses from L. to R.*]

MARSAN. Already midnight. Everything is still and weariness dulls the ears of all our watches. [*The chant of monks is heard in the distance*] Ah! The priests are chanting the mass for the condemned. Now is the time for his escape. Why does she delay? [*He sits wearily. A pause. When chanting ceases, the Turnkey enters, followed by Rose and Pierre. To Turnkey*] Go to the officer of the guard and tell him not to make his rounds till I have seen

him. I have a new countersign to give. [*Turnkey bows and exit. De Marsan turns to Rose*] Rose, you know what you have to do. When all is ready, knock at that door and the count will follow you. Now to work. To work, and make haste.

ROSE. With all my soul, my lord. [*Exit De Marsan, L. Rose to Pierre*] Come, we must lose no time. To work. What we have to do is difficult but not impossible.

PIERRE. Rose, come here. What's the use of all this?

ROSE. What do you mean?

PIERRE. I mean that you and I must have certainty in the future from suspicion. If the count escapes he will leave nothing undone to prove his innocence. That means he will do everything to find the real assassin.

ROSE. Well, what of that?

PIERRE. What of that? Why, you and I will never be at peace again till he is dead.

ROSE. Oh, monster! Would you grudge life to the innocent man condemned in your stead? Listen to me, Pierre Michel. I hold you in my power. You are going now to help me save your second victim. Help me earnestly and honestly, working with all your heart, aye, all your blood if need be. You will do this bravely, loyally, or I swear to you by the salvation of my child that I will—

PIERRE. Well, you will what—?

ROSE. [*Fiercely*] Kill you like a dog!

PIERRE. [*Cowering*] Ah! Take care! Take care! I don't love menaces. Take care!

ROSE. [*Laughing*] Bah! Take care of what? I do not fear you. You are a coward. You dare not kill me. You are afraid my death would put justice on the right scent. [*With sudden thought, going over to him and catching him by the throat*] Pierre Michel, you have betrayed us; why were you so long in getting the disguises?

PIERRE. Let go, fool! I've betrayed no one. Time flies. Let us get to work quickly, or all will be lost.

ROSE. Well, to work. But, beware. To work in earnest. [*They begin to feel around the room for the tile. As they do so, the priests chant again*] Ah! That is the chant for the dying. Pierre Michel, that chant should be sung for you this night. Think of that. Be loyal and work to save your victim. [*After a pause chanting ceases*] Ah! I find nothing. Nothing.

PIERRE. [*Aside*] I must get him away before we are discovered, or she will betray me.

ROSE. I find nothing, nothing.

PIERRE. [*Aloud*] Will we never find it?

ROSE. Hush! What's this? I have it! Ah, thank Heaven, I have it! Hark! What noise is that? Come here, I have found the spring. Come and open it. I am not strong enough. [*Pierre goes to her, pushes the spring and lifts one of the tiles out of the floor, then feels down with his foot*]

PIERRE. All right, here is a staircase.

ROSE. [*Passing him a disguise*] There, hurry on this disguise, while I knock on yonder door. [*Pierre puts on the clothes. Music. Rose steals to door and knocks. De Vernay and his mother come out*]

COUNT. Rose, is it you?

ROSE. Yes, my lady. Here, my lord, on with these clothes, quick. [*Helping him on with his disguise, then to Pierre*] Pierre, is all ready?

PIERRE. Yes, hurry!

COUNT. [*Embracing her son*] My son! My son! May God have you in His care!

VERNAY. Farewell, my mother. Courage, and farewell. [*They steal towards the trap door. As they near it, a noise is heard outside. Officer of the Guard enters, followed by Guards. Countess and Rose scream. Tableau*]

OFF. Ah! Caught in the very act! Seize him! [*To Guards. Guards seize Count. De Marsan comes in followed by Bernard, André and Louise*]

MARSAN. What means this noise? [*Portcullis falls. Crash at same time*]

OFF. My lord, a moment ago we received notice at the guardhouse that the Count de Vernay would attempt to escape from this room tonight. We came here and found him in the act. [*De Marsan recoils*]

ROSE. [*In horror*] Betrayed! Betrayed!

MARSAN. From whom does this information come?

OFF. From a messenger sent by one Pierre Michel.

ROSE. [*Shrieks. All start in horror and look at her. Rose advances wildly*] Listen, all, let my child die, I and my honor with her. I am no longer a woman or a mother. I am a conscience. My lord, the true assassin of the Baron de Bellevie is Pierre Michel.

PIERRE. [*With a cry of rage*] Ha!

MARSAN. Seize him!

PIERRE. Never! Never! [*He shakes off Guards and runs across the terrace to jump into river*]

MARSAN. Guards, fire! [*Two Guards fire. Pierre throws up his arms with a cry and falls over parapet. Rose totters, the Countess and Louise sustain her*]

COUNT. Oh, why did you not speak before?

ROSE. [*Pointing to Louise*] Because I could not blast the happiness of my child.

COUNT. Ah, Rose, is it for that you have kept silent even in the agony of torture?

ROSE. [*Weeping*] Yes, for that alone.

VERNAY. Rose Michel, you have risked the future of your child to save my life. You are a noble woman. [*Turning to Bernard*] Bernard, pay my debt. The honor of my ancient house will uphold yours. Rose has suffered enough to wipe away all stains. Let not the sins of the father fall upon the child. Take her to your heart and home.

BERN. [*After a struggle*] Rose, embrace your son. [*Louise and André advance and kneel on R. side of Rose*]

ROSE. Ah, my children, my children! May Heaven forgive the sins of my maternal love! [*Soldiers looking over parapet*]

CURTAIN

WON AT LAST

A PLAY IN FIVE ACTS

(1877)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JOHN FLEMING, *a man of the world*

PROF. TRACY, *a man of science*

WILL TRACY, *his son, a young sea-captain*

DR. STERLING, *a man of fact*

MAJOR BUNKER, *a confiding husband*

BARON VON SPIEGEL, *one who knows*

CAPTAIN MAUDLE

A SAILOR*

MR. TODDYPOP	}	<i>guests</i>
MR. MOCKEM		
MR. TENDERHUG		

ROBERT, *Fleming's valet*

GRACE FLEMING, *a true woman*

MRS. TRACY, *the professor's wife*

SOPHY BUNKER, *a French adventuress*

FLORA FITZGIGGLE, *a faded flower*

MRS. JONES	}	<i>guests</i>
MRS. SMITH		
POLLY FICKLE		
BECKY STINGALL		
MISS LOVEWILD		

JANE MCCARTHY, *a servant*

LANE, *a servant*

*In the cast of characters of the production of the play at Wallack's Theatre, New York, the sailor was named Jack Driscoll.

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SCENES

ACT I: ASHES. ACT II: EMBERS. ACT III: FIRE.

ACT IV: FLAME. ACT V: FIRESIDE.

ACT I. GARDEN OF PROFESSOR TRACY'S HOUSE ON THE SEASHORE. EXTERIOR OF HIS
OLD HOMESTEAD.

ACT II. PROFESSOR TRACY'S STUDY IN THE SAME HOUSE.

ACT III. BOUDOIR IN JOHN FLEMING'S HOUSE.

ACT IV. A DOUBLE SCENE: INTERIOR—PROFESSOR TRACY'S STUDY. EXTERIOR—THE
BEACH, OUTSIDE THE STUDY.

ACT V. JOHN FLEMING'S PRIVATE ROOM, IN HIS OWN HOUSE.

TIME: THE PRESENT (1877).

PLACE: NEW ENGLAND.

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ACT I.

SCENE: *Garden of Professor Tracy's house on the seashore. To L., exterior view of an old homestead, with old-fashioned porch, covered with vines. To R., a high boxwood hedge. R.C., an old elm, underneath and about it a rustic seat. Rustic benches, R. and L. Trees with interlacing branches. Throughout the scene in background, view of sky and ocean. Night. The garden is illuminated with Chinese lanterns; the moon is seen through the trees, shining upon the ocean. The house is brilliantly lighted inside. As curtain rises, music is heard inside. A few gentlemen and ladies are seated in groups about the garden. Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Jones are seated under the elm, R. Dr. Sterling, the Baron von Spiegel, and Capt. Maudle meet, C.*

DR. S. Ah! Captain Maudle, still flourishing, I see. When I fail to meet you at weddings, I shall believe civilization on its last legs.

MAUDLE. Aw—thanks, doctor, I think I can return the compliment.

DR. S. Well, what do you think of *this* wedding, captain?

MAUDLE. Aw—it's fair enough—but rather peculiar.

DR. S. Peculiar? In what respect?

MAUDLE. This is such a queer tumble-down sort of place for so fashionable an affair.

DR. S. Ah! But you see Grace Loring, the bride, had to be married at her own home—and Professor Tracy, her guardian, is the last remnant of an old family in an old house.

MAUDLE. Ah! I thought he had a son—

DR. S. So he had—but—bless you, he was lost at sea four years ago. A very sad affair—nearly broke the old man's heart. Since the loss of his son he's been more devoted to bugs than ever.

BARON. Defoted to boogs—vat you mean by dat?

DR. S. The professor is an entomologist—he spends his time collecting bugs and gazing at them through a microscope.

BARON. Ah! So!

MAUDLE. [*Nudging Doctor and pointing at Baron*] Introduce me, doctor!

DR. S. Ah, excuse me! Baron, permit me to present Captain Maudle. Captain, the Baron von Spiegel.

MAUDLE. [*Shaking hands*] Aw—delighted, baron, I'm sure!

MRS. J. [*To Mrs. Smith*] Isn't this wedding absurd, Mrs. Smith? Who'd a-thought that poor Grace Loring would have made such a nice match as this!

MRS. S. It's worse than absurd, Mrs. Jones; it's shocking. The idea of such a fashionable man as John Fleming choosing for his wife a demure little minx like Miss Loring! I can't understand it; it's disgusting! But come, let us go in now, and see the last dance. The affair will soon be over. [*They rise and go into the house. The Doctor, Maudle, and the Baron all laugh*]

MAUDLE. Ha, ha, very good, doctor, but you see, you know more of Fleming than I do. By the way, is the fellow an American or an Englishman? I can't make out.

DR. S. John Fleming is the only son of a rich American. His father sent him abroad to form his manners among the aristocrats of the old world. The boy liked his lessons so well that he kept at school fifteen years, that is, until his father died a year ago; then he returned to America to look after his enormous inheritance.

MAUDLE. He's rather a knowing sort of swell, isn't he?

DR. S. He ought to be, if making love develops knowledge. He has spooned in England, romanced at Rome, and flirted in France.

MAUDLE. He's deuced brave, I hear.

DR. S. Yes, he's a sort of heroic dandy—with the manners of a lamb and the heart of a lion. He has distinguished himself exploring in Africa and fighting in France. He has but one fault—he is horribly blasé.

MAUDLE. Which didn't save him from being besieged by all the mammas in high life.

DR. S. And no wonder. He returned to the parental roof a year ago, with the wealth of a millionaire, the gallant record of a soldier, and the mysterious fascinations of a used-up man, the most desirable match in America, and as you see—soon married.

MAUDLE. His wife is rich, I suppose?

DR. S. Not at all.

MAUDLE. Good gracious, how did she catch such a husband?

DR. S. With nothing, I fancy, but simple womanhood.

MAUDLE. [*Moving off*] Aw—possibly—I don't know the article. [*Exit into the house*]

DR. S. [*Walking over to seat under the elm with the Baron*] This fellow Maudle, baron, is a species of North American ape, especially fond of imitating his British cousin.

BARON. So? [*After a pause*] Doctor, tell me soomding—

DR. S. What is that?

BARON. Vat for John Fleming has married a boor girl?

DR. S. I am responsible for this marriage. I introduced him to his bride and flatter myself that I made the match. It is undoubtedly a love match.

BARON. Mein Gott! Haf you dat kint of madges here in goot societies?

DR. S. Occasionally—very rarely, however.

BARON. Ah! Dat ees goot! Steek to dat, docdor. Dere's noding so pad as lofe madges—dey pegins ferry sweet, and ends ferry sour.

DR. S. You don't believe in love, then, baron?

BARON. Oh, yes! Somedimes! Somedimes lofe is a goot ding een 'ees prober place, boot not een matrimoning! Oh, no, not een matrimonings. [*Enter Major Bunker. He looks around anxiously*]

DR. S. Ah! here comes Major Bunker. He's a queer cove—with a stupendous idea of his own sagacity and the eternal power of five dollars to settle any account.

BARON. Ees dat so?

DR. S. He's a finished humbug—prates morality by the hour—gushes sentimental slop by the barrel—hard as flint at a bargain—and soft as mush in the hands of his wife.

BARON. Who ish his vife?

DR. S. Some intriguing creature who has just trapped him in France. Mark him, baron; he's coming this way.

BUNK. [*Accosting the Doctor*] Ah! Good evening, Doctor Sterling!

DR. S. Good evening, Major Bunker. Gay affair, this wedding.

BUNK. Far too gay, sir. Marriage, like birth and death, is a very serious matter; it should be celebrated in the hushed and sober manner that befits its sacred nature. Think, sir, think, what it is to pass from the infantile innocence of maidenhood into the overpowering enlightenment of marital life. Why, sir, it's awful; it's pathetic; I may say, it's sublime.

DR. S. True, major. Ah, who would be a woman?

BUNK. Who indeed? Not I, sir. No, not for five dollars. But I forget myself. Have you seen my wife anywhere about here? [*Music stops inside the house*]

DR. S. I have not had that pleasure.

BUNK. Ah! Then I must tear myself away. I am anxious about my wife—she is so sensitive and tender. I dare not trust her far away from my protecting presence. [*Moves off*]

DR. S. The old dotard! In all that relates to his wife, he is the most abject ass that ever lived.

MRS. B. [*Entering and calling her husband*] Ah! Boonkie, tear Boonkie, loove! [*The Baron turns sharply and stares*]

BUNK. [*Rushing to his wife*] Ah, darling—here you are at last! [*They move into house slowly*]

BARON. [*Staring at Mrs. Bunker*] Mein Gott, who ees dat voman?

DR. S. That's Bunker's wife.

BARON. You dond say dat?

DR. S. Yes, it is. Do you know her?

BARON. Ho! Ferry mooch!

DR. S. Where have you met her?

BARON. In Lunnon, Baris, Baden, efferyvere!

DR. S. Who was she?

BARON. Always a vidow, whose hoosbant nobody effer saw.

DR. S. When did he die?

BARON. Hees death vas like hees marriage; ferry onsertain.

DR. S. [*Laughing*] Well, there's a suspicious mystery about the woman. And you can clear it up. Come, give us her history.

BARON. [*Grinning*] Ho, no! Ho, no!

DR. S. Why not?

BARON. Ha, ha! Can you not see?

DR. S. Oh, of course not. How could I? [*Baron whispers in the ear of the Doctor, who bursts out laughing and exclaims*] Lord bless us, you don't say! Ha, ha! [*Suddenly sobering*] But she has no right to be here, then.

BARON. Joost vat I vas a dinking: how dat voomans vas coom here.

DR. S. Ah! I see, her husband is an old friend of Professor Tracy's; that accounts for their coming. [*Whispers in ear of the Baron*]

BARON. [*Laughing*] Ha, ha, ha! Hoomboog, perfectly ridiculous! [*Loud laughter of men and women inside*]

DR. S. Ah! Here come some of the dazzlers, I mean the fashionables, crowding out here to cool after the dance. Let us move on. I don't care to meet them. [*They move off into garden, R. Enter from house Polly Fickle and Mr. Toddypop, Captain Maudle and Flora Fitzgiggle, Becky Stingall and Mr. Mockem, and others*]

FICKLE. [*Shuddering*] Ugh! How horribly cold it is! I shall get my death. Dear Mr. Toddypop, what shall I do?

TODDY. Ah! Polly Fickle, do you care a rap for me?

FICKLE. You know I do—fifty raps.

TODDY. Ah! Then you deserve one from me. Wait here and I will get you a wrap.

FICKLE. Oh! You witty man! [*Exit Toddypop*]

FITZ. My sakes alive, Captain Maudle, he, he!

MAUDLE. What's the row, Miss Fitzgiggle?

FITZ. Mamma has my fan, he, he!

MAUDLE. Happy mamma, to have anything of yours! Don't imperil her bliss; do let her keep it.

FITZ. But I shall die with the heat, he, he! I'm in an awful blaze, he, he!

MAUDLE. Good gracious! Don't die yet! What would become of me? No, no, wait here. I'll find mamma, get your fan, and save your life.

FITZ. Oh, you devoted angel, he, he!

LOVEWILD. [*Staring and gasping*] Oh! Ah! Mr. Tenderhug! Quick!

TENDER. [*Supporting her in his arms*] Dear Miss Lovewild, what is the matter?

LOVE. Oh, the sudden change to open air—too much for me. I'm faint; I'm so sensitive!

TENDER. [*Seating her*] Sit here, dear, I will fly for a glass of wine.

LOVE. No—don't fly—you'll spill the wine. [*Exit Tenderhug*]

STING. Now, Mr. Mockem, I know you're wild to join the gentlemen and guy us ladies. Don't let me keep you. I assure you I shall survive our separation! Do go!

MOCKEM. Ah, now, Miss Stingall, that's cruel. Give me some excuse to go. Have you forgotten no necessary, lost no parent, felt no spasm? Aren't you cold, faint, hungry, slightly dying, or something?

STING. No, Mr. Mockem; to be plain, I'm simply bored.

MOCKEM. Say no more. I'm off. I leave you to the tender mercies of your artless sex. Good night! Don't spare us, Miss Stingall.

STING. No, I won't. Men are callous creatures, they can stand a great deal. [*Exit Mockem. Miss Lovewild springs up stoutly*]

LOVE. Ah! Thank Heaven, we're rid of the men!

FICKLE. Yes, they make us so horribly warm. Oh, someone, do lend me a fan.

FITZ. [*Pulling fan from pocket*] Here you are, Polly, he, he! Take mine. [*Polly takes it*] If Captain Maudle looks till he finds my fan, he, he, he'll be warm enough to need it himself before it's found, he, he!

FICKLE. I say, girls, what fun it is to make fools of the men!

STING. Don't credit yourselves with that miracle, my dears! Nature made fools of them for you.

FICKLE. Bother the men! What do you think of the wedding? Have you seen the presents?

FITZ. Oh, yes, they're perfectly delicious, he, he! Such diamonds, they're just sublime, he, he!

STING. Oh, when the chains of matrimony are so dazzling, what wonder we go mad to wear them!

LOVE. Pshaw! Diamonds are all very well for the eye, but they do not satisfy the yearnings of a hungry heart. Ah, no; as for me, give me the magic thrill of a tender touch.

FICKLE. Oh, bother the chains—talk of the bridegroom. How calm and noble he looks—such self-command—

LOVE. Yes, such distinguished indifference, so bewilderingly blasé!

STING. Used-up, you mean. Yes, he's quite an aristocratic-looking clam.

LOVE. Clam! If you call him a clam, Becky Stingall, it is because you've never seen his eyes. Ah! His manner may be cold, but beneath those eyes there lurks a vast volcano.

STING. That is extinct—burnt out! And what do you think of the bride? [*Sudden silence; all grow very grave*] Well, can't some of you answer? I say, what sort of a thing is the bride?

LOVE. [*Slowly*] Nice enough, isn't she, Polly?

FICKLE. Oh, yes, don't you think so, Flo?

FITZ. He, he! I don't know what to think, he, he!

STING. At least, she's pretty!

ALL. [*Exclaiming, amazed*] Oh! Do you really think so?

STING. Of course, I do! She has a lovely complexion, and beautiful eyes.

LOVE. Pshaw! That's nothing but belladonna.

FICKLE. Oh, bother the bride!

LOVE. At least, she hasn't any style.

FICKLE. Style, ha! I should think not. Why, you'd hardly know she had anything on. She never shows her arms, nor her neck, nor—Oh, nor anything!

STING. Oh, horrible! Perhaps she hasn't any arms, nor neck, nor—nor—anything to show.

LOVE. Well, at any rate, one thing's certain, she hasn't the slightest idea how to flirt.

STING. Wicked little fool, she hasn't learned yet the fine art of being false. I pity her. There's no success in society without that! [*Noise outside, calling of carriages. All start up*]

FICKLE. Why, they're calling the carriages! The reception's at an end!

LOVE. Where is Mr. Tenderhug and my wine?

FITZ. Where is Captain Maudle and my fan?

FICKLE. Where is Mr. Toddypop with my wrap?

STING. I fancy these gentlemen are, at this moment, on their way homeward, laughing and saying: "What fun it is to make fools of the girls!"

ALL. [*Rushing into the house*] Oh! Oh! Did you ever! How shocking! Let's hurry!

STING. What sweet, honest, guileless, brilliant creatures we women are, and what brutes men are not to love us more! [*Exit into the house. After a slight pause, enter Mrs. Bunker, wrapped up to go. She looks about her mysteriously*]

MRS. B. Ah, eef I could only see 'eem von moment, before I goes away! [*Looks into house*] Oh, vy can 'e not feel my 'art crying out to 'eem to coom 'ere! [*Suddenly starting*] Ah, 'ere cooms 'ees vife! Oh, I hates zat voman, because she ees Jean Fleming's vife! Aie, but here zey coom—zey must not see me. [*Disappears, L. Enter from house Mrs. Tracy; she turns and beckons to someone inside*]

MRS. T. Come on, come along, father. [*Enter Mr. Tracy, an old man, leaning on Grace's arm*] The garden is empty now, and we can have a nice farewell talk with our darling Grace. To think that in another hour she leaves her old home—for a new one.

TRACY. Ah! It's hard on us, mother.

MRS. T. Yes, indeed! But come, let us sit here under the old elm that has sheltered us so often. [*Mr. and Mrs. Tracy sit on rustic seat under the elm. Grace kneels before them, the old man holds her off at arm's length, and looks at her*]

TRACY. [*To his wife*] Mother, look at her—this is our Grace—already a bride. No longer poor, simple Grace Loring!

MRS. T. [*Proudly*] No, but rich, fashionable Mrs. Fleming.

TRACY. How absurd it seems!

MRS. T. Yes, how well I remember the day she came to us—a little pouting baby of three years.

TRACY. The orphan daughter of my poor cousin.

MRS. T. It seems but yesterday, and now here's the baby—a married woman.

TRACY. [*Embracing her*] No, no! She can never be anything but the baby to me!

GRACE. And you were never anything but the best and dearest of fathers to me.

TRACY. That reminds me, child, I must give you a few parting words of sound advice.

GRACE. Well, father, I'm listening.

TRACY. Grace, darling, the marriage is not like the wooing—a sweet romantic dream—it is a stern reality, full of terrible disappointments sometimes.

GRACE. Oh, you can't frighten me, father dear. Go on!

TRACY. All will go well, if you don't expect too much, my dear.

GRACE. And how could I expect too much of such a man as John Fleming?

TRACY. Such a man as John Fleming! What do you know of him, baby? Nothing, except that he has fascinated you with fine manners.

GRACE. Not a bit of it! You don't know the man you're speaking of. He has something more than fine manners. He's all chivalry, tenderness, nobility!

TRACY. Oh, blissful wickedness of girlish dreams!

MRS. T. What awful mischief you do!

TRACY. My child, you judge your husband out of the innocent ignorance of your own pure heart. He's not like your old father here—a domestic ass—No! He's a man of the world—with the world's notions of a man's license. Ah! Grace! I fear you will expect too much from him. He may seem cold sometimes—neglectful, perhaps—yes, even more attentive to other women than may seem right to you.

GRACE. Father, stop there! You wrong my husband by these base suspicions.

TRACY. Well, perhaps I do. I hope so with all my heart. If you were unhappy we should be very miserable. You're all that's left us now! Oh, Grace, don't forget our boy, our brave, handsome light-hearted Will!

GRACE. Forget him! How could I forget him! Poor dear Will! Who left us four years ago, the proud captain of a new ship—

TRACY. Never to return again.

GRACE. How I wish he were alive with us tonight!

TRACY. No, I don't ask that—he's happier where he is. If he were here tonight, his poor heart might ache to see his Grace the wife of another man.

GRACE. Oh, but I will be tenfold your daughter for his sake, father!

TRACY. Oh, child, you can never know how hard it is for us to part from you!

GRACE. Dear father, do not grieve—I shall not go far, only yonder upon the hill. I shall see you every day, down here at the dear old home on the beach.

TRACY. Yes, yes. I'm a fiendish old fool to sadden you at such an hour as this. Come, let us go in. I've unburdened my heart a bit—let us go in.

MRS. T. Yes, dear—you go in. We'll follow you presently. I want to see Grace alone for a moment.

TRACY. [*Looking at his wife a moment, then suddenly understanding*] Ye—yes, quite right, my dear, I'll go. [*Starting and turning, and taking Grace in his arms*] My darling daughter, forget all my sad words in your new-found happiness, and may Heaven guard it for you forever! [*Kisses her and exit*]

MRS. T. At last, my darling, we are alone. Now come—sit by me, and pour out your heart. You're to tell me everything. Mind, you can trust an old mother. Say, child, don't you feel a little bit afraid?

GRACE. Afraid! Of what?

MRS. T. Why, of your husband, to be sure!

GRACE. [*Laughing*] Why should I be afraid of him?

MRS. T. [*Staring*] Eh? I don't know! I was of mine—awfully—when I was first married.

GRACE. But you've changed all that, mother!

MRS. T. Yes, I think I have. Charlie feels a little afraid of me now. But, really, child, you're quite sure you don't feel shaky?

GRACE. Why, how absurd!

MRS. T. [*Sobbing*] Oh, my child! My child! I hope you will always be happy.

GRACE. [*With effusion*] Always be happy? Why, of course I shall, mother. I shall be the happiest woman in the world. How could I help it—with such a husband! Oh, mother! I do so love him! He is so manly, so brave! Have you heard of his marvelous courage at the Battle of Sedan?

MRS. T. Oh, yes, child—from you, at least fifty times.

GRACE. And his daring in Africa?

MRS. T. Yes, yes, over and over again!

GRACE. Ah, how much he knows! What exquisite manners he has! He is so calm and strong and tender. Oh, mother, my wildest dream of happiness could never equal the reality of being John Fleming's wife! [*Pointing to the moon*] See, mother, see—that is my honeymoon; see how serenely it shines upon the water—glorifying the whole world with the spotless purity of its holy light! [*With a sudden pang*] Oh, but the moon is going down. Ah, I hope the honeymoon of my heart will never set—for if it does, I shall die—I shall die.

JOHN FLEMING. [*Outside*] But, my dear doctor, I count on you and don't intend to be disappointed.

GRACE. Hark, that is my husband's voice! My husband! Is it possible? Oh! It seems like some blissful dream.

MRS. T. If it is, child, may you never awake—may it last forever!

JOHN. [*Nearer, outside*] I will not listen to a refusal; you must give me your word here and now.

GRACE. He is coming this way.

MRS. T. Oh, then, I'll leave you. He may be glad to see you alone awhile. I'll go and see that all your things are ready. You know you go off with him by the midnight train. [*Going, then returning*] I say, darling, keep your

courage up. You'll soon get the upper hand, and then I'll help you to keep it.
[Exit]

GRACE. [*Looking into the house*] Yes, here he comes, this way. [*Suddenly pouting*] But there's someone with him—how provoking! Why, it's the doctor! They're talking. Who knows, perhaps of me. Ah, an idea! I'll hide, and hear what they say—yes, they'll be sure to talk of me, and if they do, ah, then I'll hear from his own lips how much he loves—adores me! [*She hides behind hedge, as John and the Doctor appear on porch. During the ensuing scene the moon sinks slowly into the sea*]

JOHN. Ah, thank the gods for fresh air! A little nature is refreshing after so much civilization, doctor.

DR. S. It always is.

JOHN. But to return to our muttons, as the Frenchmen say, it is understood, then, that you are to spend a month of the season with me—loafing, fishing and shooting here.

DR. S. Well, John, I must, I suppose, if you insist upon it, but I fear I shall spoil your honeymoon.

JOHN. There's not the slightest danger. That will end long before you arrive.

DR. S. With a woman like your wife, a man's honeymoon should last forever.

JOHN. [*Yawning*] Ah, indeed!

DR. S. Yes, she's the only woman I ever saw worth marrying. She's so frank, so unaffected—so kind.

JOHN. Really, your enthusiasm about my wife is amusing!

DR. S. Come, come, John, no nonsense with an old friend like me. You know well enough that in a quiet sort of way, you simply worship your wife.

JOHN. My dear doctor, do I really look like an idiot?

DR. S. Courtesy forbids candor to reply.

JOHN. Good! I deserve the hit.

DR. S. Indeed you do, for if you were not an idiot, you wouldn't pretend indifference to Grace Loring before me. I know you, John, well, and I know that you're the last man in the world to marry any woman that you didn't adore.

JOHN. Quite the contrary; I'm the last man in the world to marry any woman that I did adore. No, no, adoration does very well for a mistress; it's quite out of place for a wife.

DR. S. Stuff! Not another word like that—you insult yourself. Why, John, you'd be a kind of swindler if you married a noble girl like Grace without loving her.

JOHN. Loving her! [*Laughs*] Why, doctor, don't you remember what Coleridge said about the ghosts?

DR. S. [*Shortly*] No, I don't.

JOHN. Someone asked him if he believed in ghosts. Coleridge answered, "No, I've seen too many of them!"

DR. S. Well, what of it?

JOHN. Why, you see, I'm like Coleridge; you talk of love, but I don't believe in it: I've seen too much of it!

DR. S. What do you mean?

JOHN. Simply that I have sounded every note of love, high and low—and found them all false, mocking, base.

DR. S. Good heavens! Can you be in earnest? Do you really mean to say that you don't *love* your wife?

JOHN. Love her? [*Laughing*] Why, not the least in the world!

DR. S. [*Impetuously*] Wretched man! Why did you marry her, then?

JOHN. Because my father's dying words, recorded in his will, besought me to marry without delay, and in America—a mere notion of his, but sacred under the circumstances.

DR. S. No, not sacred! The dead should bury the dead, not marry the living!

JOHN. There, now, don't get excited. It's not worth while!

DR. S. But why didn't you marry a woman of your own soulless set?

JOHN. Because I saw none whose character I could trust. Miss Loring was well-bred, cultivated, and good; she will make at least a tolerable companion, and save me the ridicule and disgrace of a fashionable wife's flirtations.

DR. S. Oh! This cold, cruel shopkeeper's calculation is revolting!

JOHN. You needn't get angry, doctor, you were the one who made the match.

DR. S. Heaven forgive me! I ought to have my fool's brains knocked out for it!

JOHN. Why, what on earth's the matter?

DR. S. The matter? Why, I've been the means of entrapping Grace Loring into a degrading marriage; yes, degrading, for the man who marries a woman without loving her degrades her.

JOHN. Ah! Thank you, doctor—

DR. S. [*Turning and staring at him*] John Fleming, have you no heart?

JOHN. I don't know—perhaps—but if I have, it is a heart of ashes. [*The Doctor stares a moment, then walks away*] Hold on! Where are you going?

DR. S. I'm going to fly from the sight of my own wicked work!

JOHN. [*Going and taking his hand*] Don't leave me in this way, old friend. Stay and teach me how to make Grace happy; if not for my sake, at least for hers. [*He is going off with the Doctor. As they are entering the porch, Mrs. Bunker steals in with her face concealed, and touches John on the arm. He turns in surprise. She makes him a sign to remain. He turns to the Doctor*] Wait for me inside. [*Exit Doctor. John stares at Mrs. Bunker, and then goes to her, C.*] Now, madame, I am at your service. [*Mrs. Bunker removes her veil. John starts*] What! Is this you, Sophy? Here, at this hour?

MRS. B. Ye-es—are you sorry, Jean?

JOHN. This is very indiscreet. I thought you had gone.

MRS. B. No. I vas desperate, vild to see you, Jean.

JOHN. Well, now, what do you want, Sophy?

MRS. B. I vant to see you vonce more alone, Jean—to hold your han'—to look in your eye—to— Oh, Jean, Jean, I am very miserable.

JOHN. Miserable! What about, pray?

MRS. B. To sink zat you are married! Oh, vy deed you leaf la belle France? Ve vare so 'appy zere togezzer! Ah! Do you remembare zose sweet days in ze Rue Pigale?

JOHN. [*Aside*] Damn the Rue Pigale!

MRS. B. Ven you use to sit at my feet, and read Balzac to me?

JOHN. [*Aside*] Oh, bother Balzac!

MRS. B. Ven you use to take my han' an' look een my face viz your voonderfool eye, and svear by all ze vorld zat you love and adores me?

JOHN. [*Aside*] What an awful ass a man can be!

MRS. B. [*Bursting into tears*] You vill nevare adores me no more!

JOHN. There, there, Sophy, don't talk nonsense!

MRS. B. You do adores me a leetle beet, zen?

JOHN. Of course I do, how could I help it? But then, you know I am married now, and so are you.

MRS. B. Yees, vy for you sink I marry zat man Boonker?

JOHN. Really, I can't imagine.

MRS. B. I marry him because I know he vood bring me 'ere to America—near to you.

JOHN. [*Aside*] The devil! One of my chickens determined to come home to roost.

MRS. B. Zink of zat, Jean, zink how I loves you, ven I marry a big ole fool like zat—joost to be near you.

JOHN. [*Aside*] Damn it—I don't appreciate the devotion!

MRS. B. Boot vy for you don't say nosing to me so much all ze time?

JOHN. I am overcome by my emotions, Sophy.

MRS. B. Jean, vy for you marry zis girl 'ere today—eet ees not for love, Jean. Oh, no, say eet vas not for love.

JOHN. Pshaw, Sophy, you know well enough no man *marries* for love.

MRS. B. Ah! Zat is goot! I am so glad, eef you 'ad marry her for love [*Crying*] I vood kill myself dead away!

JOHN. Come, come, now, don't take on, and right here, too. What if someone were to come?

MRS. B. Vy zen I vood call my hoosband to take me 'ome.

JOHN. [*Aside*] Oh, if someone would only come! [*A whistle is heard; Mrs. Bunker starts*]

MRS. B. Hark! [*Whistle heard again*] Ach! Zare is Mr. Boonker! He vistles for me! I moost go—quick, but I vill not say adieu, Jean. Oh, no, I vill only say au revoir. [*She looks about stealthily a moment and then approaches John*] Jean! Zere is nobody 'ere—kees me vonce more au revoir!

JOHN. [*Hesitating, then kissing her*] There! Now go!

MRS. B. [*Going gaily*] Au revoir, mon cher. Au revoir, mon ange! [*Exit*]

JOHN. [*Looking after her*] By heavens! This is awkward! [*Wiping his lips*] Ah! What a bitter flavor a fellow's wild oats have sometimes! Now to find Grace. [*Exit into house. Grace appears, very pale and staring before her in mute despair*]

GRACE. [*Looking about her like one in a dream*] Is this my home? Am I myself? Or is it all a horrible, mocking dream? Oh, Heaven! I am going mad—going mad! [*Totters and hides her face against the elm. As she does so, John enters, and seeing her attitude, pauses and stares in surprise*]

JOHN. [*Aside*] What can this mean! Oh, the natural agitation of the day, I suppose. [*Approaching her*] Grace! [*She starts, and sinks upon rustic seat*] The world has gone at last, and left us to ourselves. Come, it is time we started for the train. [*He lays his hand on hers. She starts up and flings it off passionately*]

GRACE. Do not touch me!

JOHN. What does this mean?

GRACE. It means that your touch terrifies and maddens me!

JOHN. [*Approaching her in amazement*] Grace!

GRACE. [*Recoiling toward house*] Stand back! Stand back! [*Tottering over to the porch*] Go! Leave me! This is my home, a pure and spotless home—and here I shall remain!

JOHN. [*Advancing toward her*] Grace, you amaze me! Why do you say this?

GRACE. Why? Because I am an honest woman—because I recoil with horror from a loveless marriage—because my love and hopes, John Fleming, are

like your heart—ashes—ashes—ashes! [*Totters into the house, leaving John petrified with surprise*]

ACT II.

SCENE: *A study in Professor Tracy's house. Doors, C.E., opening on a balcony overhanging the beach. Windows, R. and L. of it. Door to inner apartment, R., another door to hall, L. Bookcases and books. Stuffed animals and skeletons. Cases of minerals and insects about the room. Lounge, R., table with papers, etc., and a large microscope upon it, C. Near it, two chairs. Over the mantelpiece a portrait of Will Tracy; under it, hung against the wall, a violin. As curtain rises, the Professor is discovered adjusting his microscope to a specimen. Enter Mrs. Tracy. She goes over slowly and speaks to her husband.*

MRS. T. Charles! [*The Professor pays no attention*] Charles!! [*Professor still absorbed*] Charles!!! [*Slapping table*]

TRACY. [*Starting angrily*] Ha! What the devil! What—you, Anna? How dare you slap the table like that? Here I've been all the morning trying to focus this machine and now you've knocked everything out of gear. It's enough to make an angel swear!

MRS. T. There, dear! You're an angel, why don't you swear?

TRACY. By thunder! I think I will. Damn! Damn—[*She stops his mouth*] nation! There now, I feel better. [*He is about to look into his microscope. Mrs. Tracy stops him*]

MRS. T. Charles, leave that thing alone!

TRACY. But, my dear—

MRS. T. No buts, now—leave it alone. I've something serious to say to you about Grace.

TRACY. Oh! Ah, yes, poor child! How is she this morning?

MRS. T. In a very strange condition.

TRACY. Hope she's well enough to start on her bridal tour to-day.

MRS. T. She refuses to go.

TRACY. What? Refuses to go with her husband?

MRS. T. Yes, positively refuses to go with him at all!

TRACY. By the great Crustaceans! Is the girl mad?

MRS. T. No, but she is evidently in great misery of mind.

TRACY. Ah, bah! The child has had a tiff with her husband. She'll soon get over it.

MRS. T. [*Shaking her head solemnly*] No, I fear she won't get over it.

TRACY. Why, what's the matter between them?

MRS. T. She won't explain. She sits like one turned to stone, pale and deathlike; with a set hard look on her face, and says nothing except that she will never be John Fleming's wife.

TRACY. But, confound it, she *is* John Fleming's wife! She mustn't make a fool of herself and a scandal for everyone, because of some little quarrel with her husband. No, no! Where is she? I'll give her a lecture and take the nonsense out of her.

MRS. T. My dear Charles, there's no use! I tell you, something terrible has happened. Something that has completely changed the child. She looks ten years older than she did yesterday.

TRACY. But Mr. Fleming will be here this morning to take her away. He told me so himself last night, when we found Grace ill. What excuse can we give for keeping her here?

MRS. T. I can't imagine.

TRACY. All this is bad, mother, bad.

MRS. T. [*Looking up at Will's picture*] Ah! If only our dear Will had lived, things would have been different. How he did love Grace!

TRACY. Yes, indeed! The great dream of my life, mother, was to have them grow up and make me a grandfather!

MRS. T. Oh, yes! What a husband Will would have made for her!

TRACY. Yes, indeed! Ah, I shall never get over his loss; my life is nothing now without him! [*Looking at portrait and starting*] Ha!

MRS. T. What's the matter, dear?

TRACY. [*In a tone of awe*] It seemed as though those eyes moved, and that mouth smiled in answer to my heart. [*Going over and laying his hand on the violin*] Ah, mother, how often he used to play this to us in the evenings, as Grace sang by his side, and there it has hung voiceless for four years, and his dear, dear hands will never, never make it speak again.

MRS. T. [*Sobbing*] Oh, father, father! Say no more! [*Sinks in chair, up R.C.*] I cannot bear it! I cannot bear it!

TRACY. There, there, dear, take comfort. The dear boy is out of this nasty, vile, wicked world.

MRS. T. Yes. There's some consolation in that. [*Enter Jane McCarthy*]

JANE. Mr. Fleming has come in.

TRACY. Good Lord, mother, do you hear that? What are we to do?

MRS. T. [*Down C., nervously*] I don't know. We'll have to say we're all out.

TRACY. No, all busy.

MRS. T. No, no! We'd better say we're all very sick.

TRACY. Mother, there's no use! We'll have to face the music sometime; the sooner the better! [*To Jane*] Show Mr. Fleming in! [*Exit Jane. Tracy hurries to his microscope*] I'm very busy, mother, I can't be disturbed.

MRS. T. Nonsense! Do you think I am going to talk to him alone?

TRACY. Why, bless you! You're a match for a dozen like him.

MRS. T. [*Pulling him away from table*] Oh! You can't get out of it that way. You've got to face the music, too, and do your share of the lying. [*Tracy crosses to right of L. table. Enter John Fleming*] Hush! He's here! [*Going over to John, cheerfully*] Oh, good morning, Mr. Fleming, we're very glad to see you. [*Crosses to C.*]

JOHN. Thank you.

TRACY. [*At table, L., holding up his hand*] Bless me! How easily she does it!

MRS. T. Ah! That's good! Are you—that is—a—a—it's nice weather, isn't it?

JOHN. [*R.*] Very.

MRS. T. [*Aside to Tracy*] Why don't you say something?

TRACY. [*Crosses to C.*] How do you—I mean when—that is—a—a—this is a glorious day for bugs, sir!

MRS. T. [*Aside*] Good heavens! Charles, what *are* you saying?

TRACY. I don't know, I'm sure, I'm trembling for fear he'll ask for his wife.

MRS. T. I'd thank Heaven if he'd ask for anything.

JOHN. Excuse me! I hope I'm not presumptuous; but really I expected to see my wife here. [*Mr. and Mrs. Tracy look at each other in despair*] I hope she's well enough to go with me now?

MRS. T. [*Nervously. Crosses to C.*] Ahem! Well, you see, the poor child is a little—a-frightened—no wonder. She's so unused to getting married. Poor thing! She'll take it easier next time.

JOHN. That's a pleasant assurance, madam, but really—a—the next time she gets married, I fear I shall not be in a condition to appreciate—a—the facility with which she takes the thing.

MRS. T. [*Puzzled*] Eh? Won't you please say that again, sir?

JOHN. [*Aside*] Oh, bother! [*Aloud*] What I said amounted to nothing, madam. However, I think I understand what you would say.

MRS. T. [*Relieved*] Oh, do you? I'm so glad!

JOHN. [*Firmly*] Will you have the goodness to say to Mrs. Fleming that I am waiting to see her?

MRS. T. [*With hesitation*] Ah, yes! Thank you, but do you think it best—a—to disturb her?

JOHN. [*Sharply*] Decidedly, madam!

MRS. T. Yes, of course. [*Going behind, to R.*] Bless us, how sharp he is! Poor Grace! Ah! What's to be the end of all this? [*Exit*]

TRACY. [*In chair, R. of L. table. Aside*] Lord! Here am I all alone with him! How can I entertain him till someone comes! [*Suddenly seeing something on John's back, he starts*] Eh? Is it? By George, it is! [*Takes from table a butterfly net, and approaching John stealthily, suddenly slaps him on the back*]

JOHN. [*Starting in disgust, turning completely round*] Good heavens!

TRACY. Don't worry, sir—it's all right, I've caught him.

JOHN. Have you, really?

TRACY. Yes! And—ha, ha!—it's all right. It's a splendid specimen of the *Caclo dasys biguttatus*.

JOHN. The what?

TRACY. The *Caclo dasys biguttatus*, a charming little parasite moth; it feeds on the *Ipomea coccinea*.

JOHN. Ah! I'm not interested in moths.

TRACY. A mistake, my dear sir. The great works of Herold on the evolution of a caterpillar, and of Seibold on the parthogenesis of insects, prove that moths have engaged the attention of master minds.

JOHN. Thank Heaven, sir, mine is not a master mind!

TRACY. Do you really mean that you have no interest in parasites?

JOHN. Not so much, I imagine, as they have in me.

TRACY. Why, sir, there's no more beautiful study in all the world than parasites. The majority of animal parasites belong to the articulate division of the animal kingdom.

JOHN. Saints preserve us! He's going to put me on the rack of science.

TRACY. Very few parasites are ever found among the radiates, the mollusca, or the vertebrates.

JOHN. Happy vertebrates!

TRACY. The parasites of aquatic animals are mostly crustacea.

JOHN. [*Aside*] Now he's tackled the aquatic, I'm done for!

TRACY. But, talking of parasites, I have in my microscope a parasite of the greatest interest to mankind. [*Adjusting the microscope*] You must really take a look at it. I have my instrument focussed on its mouth. There, now, just look at that. [*John, with a shrug, goes to the instrument, terribly bored, sighs and puts his eye to the glass*] Now isn't that beautiful?

JOHN. Beautiful! [*Aside*] I can't see a thing. [*Aloud*] What do you call the creature?

TRACY. That, sir, is a *Pediculus humanus capitis*! I collected it myself from the head of a young rascal I caught stealing my clams. It is commonly called—

JOHN. [*Starting*] Stop! Enough!

TRACY. The two groups of the creatures, *Pediculi* and *Mallophagi*, should be considered as families of the *Hemiptera*.

JOHN. Thanks, I prefer not to consider them at all.

TRACY. The *Mallophagi* have biting jaws; the Germans call them *Pelz-fresser*—skin-eaters.

JOHN. Will this torture never end! [*Enter Mrs. Tracy. John crosses to her, effusively, and shakes hands*] Ah—delighted to see you, madam. Charmed, I assure you, extremely grateful indeed.

MRS. T. [*Helplessly*] Why, what's the matter with the man!

JOHN. And my wife, what news of her?

MRS. T. She will join you in a few minutes, sir!

JOHN. Ah, for this relief, much thanks! [*Falls into a chair, R. of table, and takes up a book; Mrs. Tracy crosses to Professor and whispers in his ear*]

TRACY. Oh! Indeed!

MRS. T. Yes, we'd better leave them alone together. Come.

TRACY. [*Going*] Will you excuse me, please, Mr. Fleming? I a—a—have a little business with a—a—the clam man. You can amuse yourself with a—a—the *Pediculus humanus capitis*?

JOHN. [*Rising and bowing*] Really—your kindness is overwhelming. Well, this is pleasant. The tribulations of matrimony have begun early. What am I to do if Grace refuses to go with me? A nice position I shall be in—the butt of my club, the laughingstock of society. When she comes, what am I to say? Bah! I may as well take the bull by the horns: make this young woman understand that I appreciate the rights of a husband and mean to enforce them. I think I know how to be firm where it is necessary. [*Enter Grace*] The deuce! Here she is!

GRACE. [*Advancing slowly*] Mr. Fleming, I am here as you desire, though I cannot comprehend why you should seek this interview!

JOHN. I am glad you have come, but I hope, my dear child—

GRACE. Pardon me, sir, but I am no longer a child. Yesterday I was a happy, trusting, docile girl, but today I am a miserable, rebellious, heart-broken woman.

JOHN. [*Aside*] And a wonderfully handsome woman, too! Strange I never realized her beauty before!

GRACE. I am waiting, sir, to learn what it is that you can possibly ask of me now.

JOHN. My dear madam, the attitude you assume takes me completely by surprise. I cannot understand—

GRACE. I do not expect you to understand. Your world and mine are too far apart. That which is sacred to me is silly to you; that which is most precious to me is worthless to you. Leave me, then! Go your way, and let *me* go mine. I will not burthen you with my existence; I beseech you not to fetter me with yours.

JOHN. Are you without mercy, madam? Consider my situation a moment. After what you overheard last night, it would be useless and undignified in me to attempt to defend myself. Unfortunately, it seems we are man and wife. I have obligations to you which I have no right or desire to neglect. You also have obligations to me which—

GRACE. I free you, sir, of all obligations to me. I claim the right of equal freedom from obligation to you.

JOHN. Ah, madam, these matters are not so easily decided. You forget society.

GRACE. I have no interest in society.

JOHN. But society, alas, has a profound interest in you.

GRACE. Then I defy society.

JOHN. Ah! That is a dangerous thing to do, madam! Society is cruel—remorseless to those who defy her! She never forgives. She covers her victims with the slime of slanderous tongues, pursues them with scornful eyes and bitter taunts into the remotest corners of the earth.

GRACE. And what would you have me do, sir?

JOHN. Accept a situation you cannot change, and go with me.

GRACE. To be your wife?

JOHN. At least in appearance, as you are already in name.

GRACE. Impossible!

JOHN. And why?

GRACE. Because I revolt at the idea of converting my whole life into a living lie.

JOHN. [*With firmness*] Madam, I hope persuasion will not fail to move you; for then—

GRACE. [*Turning proudly*] Well, sir, what then?

JOHN. [*Facing her, with great determination*] For then, madam, I should be obliged to employ force. [*They face each other a moment in silence, then Grace crosses slowly to him*]

GRACE. Do you mean, sir, that if I refuse to go with you, you will employ violence to force me?

JOHN. Do not mistake me, madam. I desire in all ways to deal with you like a *gentleman*. I ask nothing unreasonable of you. In the eyes of the world you are my wife. I ask only that you will meet the appearance of that position—

GRACE. And if I refuse?

JOHN. Then, madam, the gentleman will disappear and John Fleming will become a brute!

GRACE. Which means?

JOHN. That I shall assert the rights of a husband without fear or favor.

GRACE. [*After a pause, rising*] John Fleming, I am nothing but a poor, ignorant, helpless girl. I do not know what power society accords a husband over his wife, but this I *do* know; I am not your chattel, and no person in Heaven or earth can ever make me so! I am the mistress of my own life; and rather than accept the abasement of an enslaved existence I would fling that life to the winds, death should divorce me from my degrading bonds!

JOHN. [*Stares with admiration, then turns; aside*] By Heaven, she means every word she says! This is a woman worth winning! She's a perfect revelation!

GRACE. I think, sir, we understand each other now. Permit me to retire. [*She starts up R.C.*]

JOHN. One moment more, I pray you. [*Puts chair beside her, and she sits*] After the declaration you have just made, but one hope remains. I must appeal to your generosity—surely *that* cannot fail me!

GRACE. And how can I be generous to you?

JOHN. By magnanimously considering the ridiculous position in which I find myself. If society is *nothing* to you, remember it is *everything* to *me*. You have a world of goodness in your own heart that can never cease to brighten your existence. But I have only this outward world of shams to live for; little as I respect it, still it serves to amuse me. When that is gone, all is gone. Life is bare enough at best, but when barren of human society, it is simply intolerable!

GRACE. But how do I deprive you of society?

JOHN. By making me an object of ridicule. I chose you, madam, for your character, instead of your wealth. Society is already indignant at this. When it finds that the wife I chose has quietly flung me away, its indignation will change to scorn. On every side I shall meet the maddening smile of amused contempt, the lifted brow of supercilious pity. As one of the comedians of the world I am willing society should laugh with me, but not at me. No! That is a price I would not pay, even for life itself. I should shun society, and what would there remain? Nothing but the tiresome emptiness of solitude. Be

merciful, then, madam. I have a constitutional horror of a hermit's life; do not condemn me to it.

GRACE. And how can I save *you* from it?

JOHN. Grant me the privilege of providing you with a home; of bestowing upon you every luxury, every enjoyment, every benefit that money can secure. Think what a power for good my wealth may become in hands like yours. [*Grace rises*] Ah, madam, do not repel me. Say you consent to this. [*Grace remains silent*] Believe me, for I promise upon my honor, in the home I offer you, you shall wield all the power of a wife, and enjoy all the freedom of an unmarried woman. I know that you will respect the honor of my name, and I shall equally respect every wish of your heart. [*Another silence*] Think how much misery you will save us both, and since I cannot be your husband except in name, accord me the priceless privilege of being at least your friend.

GRACE. [*Looking at him earnestly a moment, then extending her hand frankly*] Yes, I will trust you. I will go and be your friend.

JOHN. [*Taking her hand*] Madam, you have made me your eternal debtor. [*She moves up to L. table; he crosses, R.*] When can I come to claim you?

GRACE. [*Thinking a moment*] Return in an hour, I shall be ready then.

JOHN. I shall be prompt. Permit me to say, au revoir! [*John kisses her hand, goes to door, turns and looks back at her*] By Heaven, if I had a heart, that woman would command it for ever! [*Exit*]

GRACE. [*Alone before Will's portrait and looking up at it*] Dear Cousin Will, can you see me now out of your Heaven? Can you look into my heart at this moment? Ah, I hope not, for you loved me, and the sight of my misery would make your home less happy! [*Enter Mrs. Tracy, cautiously*]

MRS. T. Well, dear, he has gone?

GRACE. Yes.

MRS. T. [*Crossing to her, nervously*] How do you feel?

GRACE. [*Still gazing on Will's picture*] I feel as though I would like to be with him in his grave.

MRS. T. No, darling, don't say that; wish that he were here with us at this moment.

GRACE. That would be a useless wish. He cannot come back to life; but I—I can—

MRS. T. Sh—s—sh, dear! Don't talk like this; cheer up! All will yet be well, love. [*Grace rises slowly, puts hand to her head, and looks around her with a strange, cold stare*] Good heavens, child! What is the matter? How strangely you look!

GRACE. I feel strangely. It seems as though the last four years had faded away. I hear Will, I hear Will playing his violin, it comes nearer and nearer still. Do you hear nothing?

MRS. T. Nothing, child, this is all imagination. Excitement has made you fanciful.

GRACE. Hush! Hark! Listen! No, I hear nothing now.

MRS. T. Come, come, child! Change the subject; tell me all that has happened.

GRACE. [*Dreamily*] Happened? Where?

MRS. T. Here, today, between you and Mr. Fleming. What have you decided?

GRACE. To go with him.

MRS. T. Ah! That's my brave girl. You have done right and you will have your reward. [*Enter Jane*]

JANE. Mrs. Tracy, there's a man at the door says he must see you.

MRS. T. Who is he?

JANE. He won't give his name, but says he has important news for you.

MRS. T. Show him in. [*Enter Jane with a rough-looking Sailor. She shows him in and exit*] Now, sir, who are you and what do you want?

SAILOR. Who I am, ma'am, don't matter just now, but what I want is to speak to Mrs. Tracy.

MRS. T. I am Mrs. Tracy. What have you to say?

SAILOR. Well, mum, I have important news for you, mum, news you ain't a-looking for, I guess.

MRS. T. [*Excitedly*] Bad news?

SAILOR. No, rather good news, I reckon.

MRS. T. Good news!

SAILOR. Yes'm, if you ain't too shaky to hear it.

MRS. T. Why, man, what are you talking about? Speak! Don't keep me in suspense. What do you mean?

SAILOR. Now don't get skeered, mum. I ain't a goin'—that is—well, damn it all, a vessel has just arrived in New York! [*Grace rises and fixes her eyes on the man. Mrs. Tracy totters and leans against the table*]

MRS. T. A vessel? Well—well—?

SAILOR. This here vessel discovered an island in the Pacific. It's found some traces of a white man, too—[*Grace comes down, L. Mrs. Tracy totters toward the Sailor*]

MRS. T. Ah! You have news of my boy. Speak! Speak! Is he alive?

SAILOR. Well, yes, I'm pretty sartain he is, mum!

MRS. T. Merciful heavens—where is he? Where is he?

SAILOR. Do you think ye could stand a little peep at him just now, ma'am?

MRS. T. Stand it! The very thought makes a giantess of me.

SAILOR. By thunder, I guess it does. [*Suddenly goes to door and whistles. Enter Will Tracy, exit Sailor*]

MRS. T. [*Recoiling with a cry and looking at him*] Ah! My God!

WILL. [*Approaching her tenderly*] Mother!

MRS. T. [*Waving him back*] Stand back! Stand back!

WILL. [*Opening his arms*] Don't you know me, mother?

MRS. T. [*With a wild cry, falling on her knees and throwing her arms about his waist*] Yes, it is, it is my boy! My Will! [*Grace kneels front of table, L., buries her face and sobs*]

WILL. [*Raising his mother tenderly*] Mother! Mother! Be calm!

MRS. T. [*Smoothing the hair from Will's face*] Oh, my son! My son! Is it possible that I hold you in my arms again? Safe, alive, well! Oh, Heaven is good, kind, pitiful! Oh, how were you saved? How did you get here?

WILL. [*Seating her in a chair*] You shall hear all before long, mother. [*Pointing to Grace*] But first of all I must speak to her! [*Crossing behind table to Grace*] And have you nothing to say to me?

GRACE. [*Rising, but turning her face away, weeping*] Ah! What can I say? What can I say?

WILL. Say! Say that you have not forgotten me! That you love me still, that you are glad to see me again!

GRACE. [*Turning impulsively and throwing herself on his breast*] Glad! I am only too happy, too happy!

TRACY. [*Outside*] No, I confess, I have seen nothing of her. [*All start. Mrs. Tracy rises*]

MRS. T. Heavens! That's your father! He's coming. He must not see you too suddenly. The shock would kill him!

WILL. Kill him!

TRACY. [*Outside*] Oh! Certainly! Come right in, sir. Come right in.

MRS. T. Bless me! He's here! Grace, what shall we do?

GRACE. Here, quick! Into this room! [*Opening door, D.L.*] I will break the news to him. Quick, hurry! [*Exit Mrs. Tracy with Will, hastily. Grace shuts door*]

TRACY. [*Outside*] You can wait at the window. She may soon come this way.

GRACE. How my heart beats! And my brain whirls! How can I prepare him for this shock? I cannot. I am too nervous. I dare not attempt to do it. Mother must do it! [*Going suddenly, turning and looking at violin*] Ah!

Yes, an idea! [*Hurries and takes down the violin. Exit, D.L. Enter Mr. Tracy, followed by Mr. Bunker*]

TRACY. There, sir, if you will sit by this window, you can get a good view of the whole beach.

BUNK. Capital idea! I'll watch for her here! Strange, though, what's become of Sophy. She said she'd meet me here.

TRACY. Oh, she'll be here directly.

BUNK. I hope so! By the way, Tracy, I want your ward to know more of my wife.

TRACY. Ah!

BUNK. Yes, my wife fell in love with your ward last night. She says she's a perfect angel. When do you expect your ward back from her bridal tour?

TRACY. [*Embarrassed*] I—a—I—a—can't exactly tell—

BUNK. Whereabouts are they now, do you think?

TRACY. Really! I—a—don't exactly know.

BUNK. That's too bad! My wife thought it would be a good idea for us to surprise the young couple somewhere on their tour. Ah, if your ward only knew my wife as I do—how she would love her! How soon will you hear from the happy pair?

TRACY. Well—ye see—that is—I cannot exactly say.

BUNK. No, true, they've forgotten all the world by this time. They're deep in the honey just now.

TRACY. Yes, yes, just so. [*Aside*] Oh, if he'd only go!

BUNK. [*Starting*] Ha!

TRACY. What is it?

BUNK. At last I see my darling. She's yonder in the distance. Isn't she beautiful?

TRACY. Lovely! [*Aside*] Distance lends enchantment!

BUNK. I must be off. But I'll see you again before we go. We're going away for the summer, you know, but will be back by the autumn. So, good-bye! And I say, professor, when you write to your ward, give her my wife's earnest love! [*Exit*]

TRACY. Thank Heaven, I've got rid of that fool Bunker. Ah, what will they say when they hear the real truth? Grace married and yet determined to die an old maid! It's damned absurd. [*Enter Mrs. Tracy, who goes about the room singing, "Willie, we have missed you!"*]

MRS. T. Tra—la—la—la—la! Tra—la—la!

TRACY. [*Rising*] Why, hullo, old lady, what ails ye?

MRS. T. [*Beginning to dance*] Tra—la—la—la—la!

TRACY. Good Lord, Anna, are you cracked?

MRS. T. No! It's you who are cracked! [*Mrs. Tracy throws her arms about Tracy and whirls him about the room. He struggles to escape*]

TRACY. Anna! Anna! Stop! Bless me, you must be crazy! Ah, my dear precious wife, grief has turned your mind.

MRS. T. [*Freeing herself*] No, dear! My mind is clear enough, but what if you have been dreaming?

TRACY. [*Amazed*] What do you mean?

MRS. T. Sit down, dear, and I will explain. [*She places chair and forces him into it*] Now you dear old man, listen to me. What if Will's death were all a horrid wicked dream? What if his vessel, caught in a terrible storm, had drifted upon an unknown island and been wrecked there! What if Will had escaped the cruel waves—had reached land, had been saved!

TRACY. My poor darling! Why torture your heart and mine with these foolish hopes?

MRS. T. Because it may be true; because it must be true, because I feel sure it is true. Will cannot be dead!

TRACY. Anna, what *are* you saying?

MRS. T. I'm saying that I believe our boy is alive. I'm saying that a rough sailor came here today and said that his vessel had discovered an island in the Pacific and found upon it signs of a white man.

TRACY. [*Getting excited*] Signs, what signs?

MRS. T. Oh, father, what if they had found our boy? What if they were bringing him home alive and well? What if he had reached here safely? Hark! Listen! [*The violin is heard outside playing "Home, Sweet Home." Tracy, rising slowly to his feet, and extending his arms towards Will's room*]

TRACY. Ah! Am I dreaming, dreaming, or is it true? Is he here? Is he here? [*Cry outside*] Oh, Will, my boy! My darling, my son! Come, come, I can bear it no longer, come to my arms! [*Door opens, Will enters, followed by Grace, and rushes to his father's side, just in time to receive the old man, who sinks into chair and draws Will to him*] Ah, hug me! Hug me tight, you rascal; you haven't hugged me for four years. Make it up now, you scoundrel, you villain—you dear precious, darling young angel!

WILL. [*On knees*] There, there, father—[*Wiping his eyes*] Don't cry, old man, don't cry—

TRACY. Look at the wretch! He don't want us to cry—no—he wants all the blessed tears to himself, the young brute! [*Weeping anew*] Ah, I'm the happiest old fool in the world!

WILL. And I'm the happiest young fool! To think that I am really here, with you, father, and you, mother, and you, Grace. Ah, Heaven cannot be a

happier place than this! This is coming back to life indeed, to come back to you, Grace. [*Enter Jane, D.R.*]

JANE. Mrs. Fleming, your husband is here. [*All start*]

WILL. Mrs. Fleming! Husband! [*Enter John. Grace goes a little up L., and goes to John. Will staggers to side of L. table. Tracy, turns compassionately to Will*]

ACT III.

SCENE: *Boudoir in Fleming's house. Bay window, L., mantel and mirror, R., door to inner apartment, R. and C.F., doors opening upon terrace overlooking lawn. Sewing table, L., on it a vase of flowers and a sewing basket with baby-clothes in it. Near table, two chairs, and a console. Another table, R., with books and a flower basket; near table a lounge. As curtain rises Lane is discovered arranging the room. After a pause, enter Dr. Sterling.*

DR. S. Ah, Lane, where's Mr. Fleming?

LANE. He's not returned from his morning ride yet.

DR. S. He made an appointment with a party from the hotel for a game of tennis this morning.

LANE. Oh, he'll be in time, sir!

DR. S. Well, I'll wait and receive the tennis party here myself.

LANE. [*Going*] All right, sir. [*Exit, R. & E.*]

DR. S. [*At door, C.F., looking off R.*] Ah! Here they come already. Bless me, there's old Bunker with them. When did he arrive, I wonder? I'll warrant as usual he's looking for his wife. [*Sits, L. Enter Bunker, D.F., looking about him*]

BUNK. [*Not recognizing Doctor*] Excuse me, sir, but have you seen my wife anywhere around here?

DR. S. [*Facing him*] Your wife, Bunker?

BUNK. Gracious! It's Dr. Sterling—delighted to see you!

DR. S. When did you arrive?

BUNK. Only last night. I overslept myself this morning, and so my wife, dear little witch—she steals softly out of bed and away she pops for the cliffs, leaving word that I should meet her here. She's such a child—so awfully fond of nature.

DR. S. Yes. [*Aside*] Masculine nature!

BUNK. But it's very strange what's become of Sophy. She said she'd meet me here soon.

DR. S. Oh, she'll come—[*Aside*] Confound her!

BUNK. I'm on pins and needles while she's away. You little dream what an angel she is—she's so different from other women.

DR. S. In what respect?

BUNK. She so hates the men.

DR. S. Indeed! How's that? You're a man. Does she hate you?

BUNK. No, indeed. She just worships me, but then, she says I'm so different from other men. Why, sir, you won't believe it, but she declares that if it wasn't for my whiskers she'd hardly know I was a man, the dear child.
[*Doctor laughs. Enter Fitzgiggle on the arm of the Baron, laughing*]

DR. S. Good Lord, here's Flora Fitzgiggle, the sunflower of the age!

FITZ. Oh, but he's so splendid, yes, he's just elegant. He has such distinguished indifference of manner, hasn't he, doctor?

DR. S. Can't say, Miss Fitzgiggle. Of whom are you talking?

FITZ. Of dear John Fleming. He is the ideal of my soul—so blasé! Such eyes—such eyes!

BUNK. Oh, bother his eyes! His wife's the ticket for me.

BARON. His vife vas a dictet. Vat you mean by dat?

FITZ. Do you really think so?

BUNK. Of course, she has such a delicious complexion.

FITZ. Arsenic and clam water.

BARON. And soche fine golten hair.

FITZ. Potash and soda.

BUNK. And such a magnificent figure.

FITZ. Haircloth and cotton.

DR. S. [*To Fitzgiggle*] Really, your knowledge of chemistry and make-up is amazing.

FITZ. Of course it is, why not, yes? [*Giggles*]

DR. S. What are you laughing at?

FITZ. Can't help it—I know so much it makes me laugh. [*Giggles*] Men are such fools!

BUNK. A mistake, my dear; I'm no fool, and John Fleming's no fool. No, no, not he; he's a mighty lucky dog. Think what he commands: youth—beauty—brains—and the dearest little wife in the world.

FITZ. Oh! You'd better leave the little wife out, Major Bunker. He doesn't seem to command her much.

BUNK. Why? She belongs to him, don't she?

FITZ. Well, she's married to him.

DR. S. Yes. John Fleming is one more ass on the list.

BUNK. Ass? Why? Because he married Grace Loring?

DR. S. Because he married anyone. Every man who marries is an ass!

BUNK. You forget, sir, that I am married.

DR. S. Oh, no, I don't. You're the most dazzling proof of my assertion.
[*All laugh*]

BUNK. [*With melancholy dignity*] Sir, you've hit me on my softest spot. My wife is the ideal of my soul. No man could be an ass to marry her. Why, sir, I wouldn't lose. No sir, not for five dollars. [*All laugh*] Oh, you needn't laugh. I mean what I say—my wife and I are one—we're never parted.

DR. S. Nonsense—you are parted now.

BUNK. No, sir, Sophja Bunker is ever near her husband's heart. [*Pulls a silver whistle from his pocket*] Friends, do you see that? It looks like a whistle, doesn't it? But, friends, it is the holy link that binds me to my wife, the silver lining to the cloud of my life, the sacred talisman of our earthly bliss.

BARON. Ach, hoomboog! He makes too many speeches!

DR. S. Bunker, you've been at the bottle. What has that thing to do with your wife?

BUNK. Scoffer, you shall see! If my precious wife is within reach of this little voice—well, I will only say—you shall see. [*Blows his whistle. Pause. All stare. Blows again*]

DR. S. Why, the man is mad!

BARON. [*Recoiling*] Mein Gott!

DR. S. Bunker, what in the devil's name?

BUNK. [*Waving him back*] Wait—trust you shall not be deceived! [*Gives an angry blast with his whistle*]

MRS. B. [*Outside*] I'm coomin', birdie! I'm coomin'—[*Appears in doorway, breathless, with flowers in her hand*] Here I am, loove!

BUNK. [*Triumphantly*] There, friends, what do you think of that?

BARON. [*Staring*] Perfectly ridiculous!

MRS. B. [*Advancing*] Deed you vant me, Boonkie, dear?

BUNK. Only a moment, sweet! Just to know that you are near. What are you doing, darling?

MRS. B. Peeking soom flowers; watching ze leetle buzy bee and ze 'appy busserfly!

BUNK. Poetic soul! Return to your heaven, angel—go and be happy.

MRS. B. [*Kissing him*] All right, my doove. Bye-bye, Boonkie, tear, bye-bye. [*Exit, kissing her hand*]

BUNK. [*In rapt admiration*] Ah! There goes spotless innocence. The ever green guilelessness of the new-born babe. Well, friends, you have seen; what do you say?

FITZ. That Mrs. Bunker pays dearly for your whistle.

BARON. Dat you 'av a queer vay to plow up your vife's—dat you'd better go and peek some flowers—an' watch ze 'appy busserfly! [*All laugh. Bunker starts, slaps his hat on his head, and rushes out indignantly, followed by the laughter of the others*] Ha, ha, ha! I belief dot man is crazy! [*All make exit, giggling and laughing. Enter Lane*]

LANE. Now that the crowd of visitors have gone, perhaps my mistress can have some peace here. I'll go and tell her. [*As she is about to go, R., enter John in riding suit*]

JOHN. Ah, Lane, I'm glad I've met you. How is Mrs. Fleming this morning?

LANE. Perfectly well, thank you, sir.

JOHN. Is she awake yet?

LANE. Why, bless you, sir, she's been about these four hours and made her rounds.

JOHN. Her rounds?

LANE. Yes, sir, her rounds among the sick and poor. She visits them every morning, you know.

JOHN. Yes, I remember. [*After a pause, handing some flowers to Lane*] Here, Lane, take these to your mistress with my lo— with a hearty good-morning from me.

LANE. [*Taking flowers*] Thank'ee, sir.

JOHN. You may say I picked them for her, myself.

LANE. I will, sir, and she'll be right glad to hear it. [*Exit, R.E.*]

JOHN. [*Looking at his watch*] Ten o'clock—time the tennis party were here. [*Going to terrace doors, C.*] Wonder if they have come yet! [*As he is about to look out, he is suddenly confronted by Mrs. Bunker. He recoils, provoked*] What—you here?

MRS. B. Yes, ve came to ze hotel las' night, an' zis morning vile Monsieur Boonkair vas asleep I stole away ofer eer to see you vonce more alone.

JOHN. [*Aside*] Damn it! Always wants to see me alone!

MRS. B. Boot you vare not 'een, an' I've been vaiting viz a beating 'art to see you. Vy, Jean, you do not look happy to see me!

JOHN. Sophy, you must not come to this house.

MRS. B. Mon Dieu! Vat you mean?

JOHN. That this is the home of my wife, and you can easily understand—

MRS. B. Un'erstan'—no! I do not un'erstan'. Ees no Monsieur Boonkair an' ole frien' of Madame Fleming, and am I not hees vife?

JOHN. Yes, yes, that's all true, but then—

MRS. B. Vell, vat zen?

JOHN. I will be frank with you. The night of my wedding you and I had a meeting—alone, as you supposed. But we were not alone—my wife was there, and she overheard us.

MRS. B. [*Cheerfully*] Mon Dieu! Zen she knew all about who I was?

JOHN. Yes! [*Mrs. Bunker pauses a moment, then goes to door, R., opens it, looks out, closes it carefully, crosses to bay window, looks behind curtains, crosses to terrace doors, closes them carefully. John Fleming looks on, puzzled*] What the deuce is she about now?

MRS. B. [*Crossing to John, taking his arm and looking into his face*] Ah, Jean, zis time ve are alone, for sure. Oh, for sure! [*John is aghast*] Don't you have nosing to say to me all ze time vonce more?

JOHN. [*Amazed*] Say—what can I say?

MRS. B. Ah! Can you evare forget zose sweet valks in ze voods!

JOHN. [*Aside*] Oh, Lord!

MRS. B. Ze flowery paz among ze trees!

JOHN. [*Aside*] Oh, Lord!

MRS. B. Ah! I vish ve vare zare now, Jean!

JOHN. [*Holding his head in despair*] This woman will drive me mad.

MRS. B. Don't cry, Jean. Are zare not some voods near 'ere?

JOHN. [*Starting away from her*] The devil! [*Walks up and down fiercely*]

MRS. B. Oh, mon Dieu! Zat is not ze vay ve walk in ze voods, Jean. Oh, no, it vas mooch more zhentle zan zat!

JOHN. [*Aside, frantic*] How can I get rid of this creature without brutality?

MRS. B. [*Sitting and taking note from her bosom*] Jean, I 'ave 'eer a dear leetle note zat you wrote me vonce. Let me see—how long ago! Oh, ze note vill tell us zat. [*Looks at note*] No—eet 'as not date—eet 'as nosing but "Mercredi matin" Vensday morning—on 'eem. Ah, mon Dieu! Vat you sink! Today ees Vensday. Oh, 'ow nice! Ah! I vish he vas so nice as zat Vensday, Jean.

JOHN. [*Aside*] If this sort of thing continues, I shall do something rash.

MRS. B. I always keep zis note nex' my 'art, Jean. Let me read 'eem to you. [*Reads*] "Chez moi—Mercredi matin, ma chère Sophie, Viens me trouver à la maison ce matin, et nous aurons une belle promenade dans les bois: une de ces promenades poétiques qui sont dignes des dieux de la vieille Grèce. Je t'attend avec impatience. Dépêche-toi. Toujours ton dévoué Jean." "Always zy devoted John." [*Weeping*] Ah, you are nevare no more my devoted Jean!

JOHN. [*Exploding*] Confound this nonsense!

MRS. B. [*Startled, springs up into chair*] Ah, mon Dieu, vare 'ees 'ee? Vat 'ees ze masser?

JOHN. Sophy, you must leave this house at once, and never come here again.

MRS. B. [*Coming down from chair*] And vy moost I do zat?

JOHN. Because you're shockingly indiscreet—people will talk; your husband will hear them.

MRS. B. Oh, vell, let 'eem 'eer! 'Ee vill belief nozing. Oh, 'ee's a splendid ole fool, my hoosban'. Vy, Jean, vat you zink eef ze Angel Gabriel—?

JOHN. The what?

MRS. B. Ze Angel Gabriel. Eef ze Angel Gabriel vas to coom down an' say: "Monsieur Boonker, your vife 'ees a sinner," Monsieur Boonker would answer zat angel and say, "Monsieur Gabriel, you lie, my vife ees a saint."

JOHN. [*Sternly*] Enough of this! Pardon my rudeness, madame, but you force me to it. I must request you to leave my house forever.

MRS. B. [*Staggered*] Vat! Turn me away, an' call me madame! [*Crossing with suppressed rage*] Oh, now I un'erstan' you, sare! You are in love vis yor vife! You are von big fool, too!

JOHN. That is my affair, madame!

MRS. B. Ah, ha! Ees eet so, Monsieur Fleming? Very vell, sare, ve sall see! I vill go, but you vill nevare vin ze 'art of your vife. All ze world knows zat she 'as give her 'art already to anozzer man.

JOHN. [*Opening door*] Madame, the door is open. Adieu!

MRS. B. [*With venom, masked in smiles*] Ah! I am enchantée viz your politeness, sare! I sall not forget eet. I am ver' mooch obligated to you. I sall pay my leetle debt. I sall 'ave my leetle revanche. Au revoir, Monsieur Fleming. Au revoir! [*As she goes, she backs into Dr. Sterling, and steps on his toes. He howls; she shrieks and rushes off. Dr. Sterling limps in*]

DR. S. Oh, by Jove, how much do you think that woman weighs, and what in the devil is she doing here?

JOHN. Don't ask impertinent questions.

DR. S. [*Crossing to John*] I say, John, it's bad enough to have that woman on your toes; it must be awful to have her on your hands!

JOHN. Oh, change the subject.

DR. S. Yes, I'll be merciful! Have you thought over the matter I was discussing with you yesterday?

JOHN. What matter?

DR. S. The matter relating to your wife.

JOHN. No! Why should I think about it?

DR. S. Why? Because her indiscretions with Mr. Tracy are beginning to be the talk of the town. Keep Tracy out of your house or he'll get Grace's heart into his keeping.

JOHN. You're mistaken. For three months I have studied my wife and I have learned at last to know a true woman, a woman whose instincts are so pure that the mere thought of vice is revolting: a woman whose heart is so holy that it keeps head and hands busy with good works. Such a woman is incapable of wrong. If there were the least danger of her falling in love with Mr. Tracy, she herself would be the first to banish him from the house.

DR. S. By Heaven! John, I believe at last you love your wife!

JOHN. Love her—no! It needs a purer heart than mine to hold the love that she deserves.

DR. S. My dear boy, why are you not more attentive to your wife?

JOHN. She is so different from the women I've been used to. Do you know, she's the only woman in the world that ever embarrassed me a bit?

DR. S. Indeed! Well, now, hereafter you must be more attentive, more devoted to her.

JOHN. I'll try, but I'm such an infernal old sinner, that when I find myself with her I grow speechless with self-contempt. [*Grace enters with John's flowers in her hands. She pauses at sight of John and the Doctor. They don't see her*]

DR. S. Well, come, let us go to our tennis. What you say proves the old adage, it's a terrible penance for a husband to be long with his wife. [*They go off, C.D. Grace looks after them*]

GRACE. So absorbed they couldn't even see me; talking of me, too, sneeringly! So it's a penance for him to be long with me! [*Looking at the flowers in her hand*] And yet he sends me these. Ah, why should he torture me with these hypocritical attentions? [*She places the flowers in a vase. As she is doing so, Miss Fitzgiggle appears, C.D., with a tennis bat in her hands. She rushes to Grace*]

FITZ. Oh, you are here, Mrs. Fleming. I'm so glad. Perhaps you can tell me where to find Mr. Fleming. He invited us to tennis. He doesn't appear. We can't make up our party without him. We are wasting our time and—

GRACE. [*Interrupting*] One word, Miss Fitzgiggle. Mr. Fleming has just left the house, doubtless to join your party.

FITZ. [*Going*] Oh, indeed. Then it's all right! I'll find him and—[*Stopping suddenly at door, then turning to Grace*] Mrs. Fleming, I hate to leave you all alone. Won't you join us?

GRACE. [*Walking up and down, with irritation*] Thank you, I am quite contented where I am.

FITZ. Dear Mrs. Fleming, how nervous you seem! What's the matter?

GRACE. I'm a little uneasy about my cousin, Mr. Tracy, that's all!

FITZ. [*With significant inflection*] Oh, your cousin! [*Begins to giggle*]

GRACE. Good heavens, Miss Fitzgiggle, what are you laughing at?

FITZ. At something Miss Stingall said just now. I must tell it to you, it's so cute. She says that some women use their husbands as they do their fans, as a mere cover for their coquetry. There now, isn't that bright? I'm off. Bye-bye, Mrs. Fleming. [*Kissing her effusively*] Oh, you dear creature, you are so sweet, he-he! Bye-bye, dear, bye-bye. [*Exit, with spasmodic hops, giggling and swinging her bat*]

GRACE. [*Looking after her*] And these are the women whose society he seeks! And yet there was a time when he was my ideal man. [*Sighing*] But three months ago, and yet how far away it seems! [*Crossing to workbasket and seating herself*] Well, well! I must be patient, patient. [*Takes up sewing, begins to sew*]

JOHN. [*Appearing at door with Dr. Sterling, hurriedly*] May I come in? [*Grace starts; John advances*] I hope I don't intrude?

GRACE. Not in the least.

JOHN. [*After awkward pause*] May I ask what you are doing?

GRACE. Certainly! I'm sewing.

JOHN. Sewing, yes, I see, but then—why should *you* sew?

GRACE. Because it's a pleasure.

JOHN. Sewing a pleasure? I never heard of such a thing; and what are you sewing?

GRACE. [*Pointing to baby-clothes in basket*] I'm making those.

JOHN. [*Takes baby-clothes out of basket and looks at them with puzzled expression*] Hum! These are queer little things, but what are they for?

GRACE. Can't you imagine?

JOHN. Not for the life of me.

GRACE. [*Simply*] Well, then—they're baby-clothes.

JOHN. [*Drops them like hot shot, and stares at her*] Baby-clothes? What for?

GRACE. A baby.

JOHN. Oh, yes, I suppose so, but whom are they for?

GRACE. For Mrs. O'Brien.

JOHN. Eh! Does she wear baby-clothes?

GRACE. [*Smiling*] How absurd you are!

JOHN. Yes, of course. But, then, I don't understand.

GRACE. It's very simple. Mrs. O'Brien is a poor woman, who cannot find time or means to make proper clothes for her baby, and so I amuse myself doing it for her.

JOHN. [*Aside*] What an angel she is! [*Aloud*] I wish I had a baby—no, I mean I wish I were a baby. No, I mean I wish I—you—[*Breaking down, aside*] Confound it, I don't know what I mean! [*After a pause*] A—a—I—a— Beg pardon, did you speak?

GRACE. Oh, no—

JOHN. Yes, I thought so—that is, I mean—this sort of thing is a rather queer kind of amusement, isn't it? [*Fooling nervously with the baby-clothes and holding them up*]

GRACE. Oh, no—not queer. The very best amusement. [*Sadly*] I should be very miserable if I were idle. [*Aside*] Busy hands are good for aching hearts.

JOHN. [*Picking up a man's scarf*] Is this a baby-clothes, too?

GRACE. No, that is Will's scarf. I've been putting an elastic to it.

JOHN. [*Beginning to fuss with his glove*] By the way, how is Mr. Tracy this morning?

GRACE. I cannot tell yet. The doctor was to see him today. I am waiting anxiously to hear his report.

JOHN. [*Trying to pull button off his glove. Aside*] Ah, what care she takes of her cousin! I wish I could get a little of her attention. I wonder who's been at these buttons. This is no shop work—the confounded thing won't come off. [*Wrenching off button and exclaiming*] By George!

GRACE. What's the matter?

JOHN. Oh, nothing, only I've burst a button off my glove.

GRACE. Ah, that's strange, I thought I had tightened them sufficiently.

JOHN. [*Astounded*] Oh! Ah! It is you who—a—

GRACE. Hold out your hand and I will sew on another.

JOHN. [*Sticking out his hand in a kind of stupor*] Yes! Really you're very kind. [*As she sews, he sighs*]

GRACE. [*Carelessly*] Why do you sigh?

JOHN. Sigh! Did I sigh?

GRACE. Oh, don't apologize! I know it's tiresome, but I won't be long.

JOHN. Long? I wish this would last forever.

GRACE. [*With a little laugh*] Thank you. I might tire by that time. There, it's done.

JOHN. [*Sighing*] Yes, more's the pity! [*Awkward pause*]

GRACE. You've forgotten something.

JOHN. [*Looking about, puzzled*] Have I? What is it?

GRACE. You've forgotten to thank me.

JOHN. [*After a pause, in a changed voice*] I don't know how to thank you. [*Going nearer to her*] I wish I did, for then I might hope.

FITZ. [*Appears in doorway*] He, he, he! So here you are, Mr. Fleming.

JOHN. [*Starting, and aside*] Oh! Damn this giggling fool!

FITZ. Oh, you must come to the rescue, Mr. Fleming. He, he, he! Our side can't get on without you. He, he, he! We're being horribly beaten.

JOHN. But, really, Miss Fitzgiggle—

FITZ. Oh, really we can't excuse you. Your wife won't mind, will you, dear? You see so much of him, you know that you can spare a bit of him to us—he, he, he!

GRACE. Oh, certainly.

FITZ. [*Going*] You hear, Mr. Fleming, you must come now.

JOHN. Confound the girl! I suppose I must go to get rid of her. [*Going, then coming back to Grace*] I—a—hope—a—[*Stops embarrassed*]

GRACE. Well, did you want anything?

JOHN. Oh, no, thank you. I—a—but it's no matter now—au revoir!

FITZ. [*Returning*] Ain't you ever coming?

GRACE. Good-by!

JOHN. Damn it! I wish this laughing hyena was in ballyhack! [*Exit, with Miss Fitzgiggle, who giggles after they go off. Grace lays aside her sewing, crosses to terrace door, and looks after them.*]

GRACE. He really seemed provoked at leaving me. Oh, if I could only believe in it! [*Laughter outside*] That laughter mocks my hopes. I will shut it out. [*Closes terrace door. While she is doing so, Will enters, R.*]

WILL. Ah! Here you are!

GRACE. [*Turning and rising*] You here, Will? I am so glad to see you.

WILL. Yes, here I am again, like the fool I am. Why, how well you're looking all of a sudden.

GRACE. Yes, I don't know why, but I feel very well today. [*She smiles*]

WILL. By Jove, if you only knew what a beauty you were when you smiled, you'd do nothing else.

GRACE. Don't be ridiculous! Enough of me! Talk of yourself. Have you seen the doctor?

WILL. Well, somewhat: but what on earth induced you to send the doctor to me?

GRACE. Because I wanted him to find out and tell me what you won't tell me.

WILL. What's that?

GRACE. Why, all about these strange attacks of yours. Since your sun-stroke you've been a changed man.

WILL. Nonsense, I'm as well as ever now.

GRACE. I know better. Why, this morning as we were coming up the bank from Mrs. O'Brien's, you suddenly turned ghastly pale and staggered.

WILL. What of that? I know men who stagger every day, and live a century. Why, a man that don't stagger now and then isn't worthy of his country.

GRACE. Come, come, Will, no more joking, please. Tell me what the doctor said.

WILL. Oh, he said very little: but he shook his head like a palsied parrot.

GRACE. Oh, Will, I am frightfully anxious.

WILL. Anxious about what!

GRACE. About you—if anything were to happen to you, I believe I should—well, I don't know what I should do.

WILL. [*Tenderly*] You do care a little for me, then, Grace?

GRACE. If I didn't, I should be the most heartless woman in the world.

WILL. [*Sighing*] I'm glad you're not the most heartless woman in the world.

GRACE. Oh, Will, you mustn't die and leave me now.

WILL. Well, no. I won't, if I can help it. Do you know, Grace, if I should die and go to Heaven and you were not there, I shouldn't believe it was Heaven at all. I should think it was the other place.

GRACE. Oh, don't, Will! That's wicked.

WILL. Is it? [*Sighing*] Well, so am I, very.

ROBERT. [*Entering with salver, R.*] Card for you, ma'am.

GRACE. [*Taking card and reading it*] "Madame Sophie Bunker."

WILL. [*Starting*] What! That woman dares come here!

GRACE. [*Turning with dignity*] And why not!

WILL. [*Aside*] What a fool I am! She doesn't know the creature.

GRACE. [*Aside*] If I refuse to meet this woman now, Will will see that I know who she is, and what she has been. He must not suspect this. [*Aloud to Robert*] I will receive the lady at once. [*Exit Robert, R.E.*]

WILL. Shall I leave you, Grace?

GRACE. No, please remain. [*Will crosses to bay window, and seats himself. Grace crosses to piano, closes it and puts up her music. While she is doing this, Mrs. Bunker is ushered in by Robert, who then goes out*]

MRS. B. [*Looking at Grace*] Ah, ha! Monsieur Fleming, it is my turn now! I vill 'ave my leetle revanche—you vill drive me out of your 'ouse? Very well. Your vife sall go, too. Zese are your favorite flowers. Your vife sall zee

zem in my han's vis her eye. See sall hear zis leetle note, too, viz her ear. Zen ve vill see.

GRACE. [*Turning and seeing Mrs. Bunker, advances and points to a chair*] Will you be seated, madame?

MRS. B. [*Holding up her hands with affected surprise*] Ah, madame, I am enchantée to see you, but it 'ees a pleasure zat I deed not expect.

GRACE. Ah, how is that?

MRS. B. Vell, you see, I sought you vare not 'eer.

GRACE. I do not understand you. Did you not call here to see me?

MRS. B. Oh, I am ver' 'appy to see you, madame, but franchement I did not know you vare 'eer, and it vas Monsieur Fleming zat I come to see.

GRACE. Ah?

MRS. B. Yes, I vill explain. Monsieur Fleming and I are ver' ole frens. Oh, yes, ver' dear and intimate frien's indeed. Ve have seen each ozer ver' often in la belle France.

GRACE. You surprise me, madame. I was not aware that in France ladies called upon gentlemen, however dear or intimate their friendships may have been.

MRS. B. Oh, but I deed not come vizout an invitation, madame. Oh, no! You see, I only arrive 'ere las' night, and ven I coom down to breakfas', ze first sing I see on my plate were zese beautiful flowers and zis ravishing leetle note from Monsieur Fleming, inviting me to meet 'eem 'eer.

GRACE. [*Aside, looking at the flowers*] The very same flowers that he sent me! And I am to share his attention with this creature. Heaven give me patience!

MRS. B. Ah, madame, Monsieur Fleming has ze grand talent for ze billet doux. I assure you zis leetle note 'ees quite vorzy of Don Juan hisself. Look, madame, see!

GRACE. [*With bitter contempt*] Thanks, madame, I am not in the habit of amusing myself with Mr. Fleming's correspondence.

MRS. B. [*Not heeding her*] Ah, madame, perhaps you don't read ze French? I vill put 'eem in Engles for you. Ees so charmant: [*Translates*] "At home, Vensday morning. My teer Sophy: Come and find me at ze 'ouse zis morning, an' ve vill 'ave a beautiful valk in ze voods, von of zose poétique valks zat are vorzy of ze gods of ze ole Grèce. I vait for zee viz impatience. Hasten yourself. Always zy devoted Jean." Zare, ees not zat ravissant, madame? [*Grace remains with clasped hands, like one petrified. Mrs. Bunker looking at her, and aside*] Eef she knows who I am an' can stan' zat, zen she is not a voman—ze is a cabbage!

GRACE. [*Turning slowly, in a stern voice*] Do you mean to say you received that note from Mr. Fleming this morning?

MRS. B. Certainly, madame, and viz zese flowers: zat is vy I am come 'eer.

GRACE. Permit me to look at that note.

MRS. B. Oh, of course, madame.

GRACE. [*Takes note, hesitates a moment, then looks at it, starts and lets it fall from her fingers on the floor*] It is true! His own hand, dated here this morning. [*She turns aside to conceal her emotion*]

MRS. B. [*Picking up note, and aside*] She 'ave swallow ze poison, an' eet vill do its vork.

GRACE. [*Goes upstage and opens door to Mrs. Bunker*] Madame, you came to see Mr. Fleming. You will find him on the lawn. Go to him, and say I sent you. I think he will understand the rest.

MRS. B. [*Bowing herself out*] Ah! Zank you, madame, zank you. [*Aside, as she goes*] Ah, ha! Monsieur Fleming, I sink now zat I sall 'ave my leetle revanche. [*Exit Mrs. Bunker, C.D. Grace closes the door upon her, turns, leans with her back against it, lifts her hands above her head, and utters a cry of agony*]

GRACE. Oh, Heaven, what have I done to deserve this shame, this degradation! [*Hides her face in her arms and sobs. Will advances, looks at her a moment, and then goes to her impulsively*]

WILL. Grace! Grace! Don't grieve like this!

GRACE. [*Starting and recovering herself*] Ah, I forgot that you were there. Go, leave me now. I am weak. I wish to be alone.

WILL. [*Crossing to her*] Yes, Grace, I am going away, far away from you and home.

GRACE. [*Raising her head and staring at him*] What do you mean?

WILL. If I remain here, I shall get desperate and rebel. I must fly before it is too late. Yes, leave this place forever.

GRACE. [*Clinging to him*] And when you are gone, oh, what will become of me?

WILL. [*Impetuously*] Ah! Dash off your bonds and go with me!

GRACE. [*Recoiling*] Ah, how can you speak such words as these!

WILL. I am wild, desperate, mad—I can no longer govern my revolt at the sight of what you suffer. You, so worthy, so pure, so patient! You who, deserving an angel's crown, wear worse than a convict's chains.

GRACE. I beseech you, say no more.

WILL. Oh, I must speak. I can no longer see this gentle and proud heart, this noble womanhood insulted, lost, disdained, dishonored, outraged; no, it is unendurable, unendurable.

GRACE. Silence! You have no right to tempt me from my duty here.

WILL. Your duty here! Ah, what duty has purity to pollution? No, no, Grace, away with this living lie! Return to the house where love and reverence encircled you. Come, go back with me to the old home. Every beat of my heart, every thought of my brain, every act of my hand, shall be consecrated to your service.

GRACE. And if I fly, shall I not still be his wife? Yes, I married him of my own free will; shall I now like a coward shirk the results of my own act? No, I have no right to break the vows I freely made: his sin does not excuse my perjury. No, I will stay; I am not the only woman in the fashionable world forced to endure or to die.

WILL. And must I go alone, then? For I will never enter this house again. Must I calmly cast myself into the iron hands of despair? And for what? That I may leave you here, fettered and wretched, the patient slave of convention, the insulted wife of fashion, the miserable victim of a worthless marriage!

GRACE. Spare me! Urge me no more! Have mercy!

WILL. What is mercy? Where is it? Who has it? Neither Heaven nor earth, gods nor men, no, not even you! For you drive me, who would die to make you happy, into a darkness worse than death, the living darkness of a ruined life. [*Grace sobs, Will kneels by her side*] Oh, Grace, Grace! I am a miserable wretch, I have no right to speak these words to you, but for years you have been the dearest thought of my existence, and now my love, which should be a blessing, can only be a curse. [*Grace remains silent. He takes her hand*] Ah, then, speak to me one word of farewell and Godspeed. [*Grace remains immovable*] What, no word of pardon or farewell? You are right. It is better so, perhaps. [*Kisses her hand tenderly, and goes slowly to the door. As he gets there, Grace starts up with a cry of agony*]

GRACE. No, no! Come back! [*Enter John, C.D. Will rushes forward and takes her in his arms. As he does so, John enters and watches them. Grace continues in anguish*] I am dazed, bewildered, mad. I know not what I do or say. I only know that here is misery, heartache, humiliation; at home with you, peace, affection, happiness.

WILL. Courage! We will go at once. Courage, for I swear that I will find a way to free you from the cruel bonds that bind you here. [*As Will is leading her away, they are suddenly confronted by John*]

JOHN. [*With suppressed fury*] Stop! [*They start. Grace places herself quickly between the two men. John looks at her sternly*] You, madame, remain here! [*To Will*] You, sir, follow me! [*Will is about to go. Grace grasps him*]

GRACE. No, you shall not go.

JOHN. Woman, stand aside, or I will drag him from this house with my own hands.

GRACE. What has he done to you that you dare to lay your hands upon him?

JOHN. He has tried to rob me of my wife.

GRACE. Your wife? Who is she? Where is she? Show her to me that I may weep with her!

JOHN. I am not here to prate, but to punish.

GRACE. Punish whom? The author of this miserable hour? Then punish yourself, or better, reach out your hand and strike the world that made you what you are.

JOHN. [*To Will*] Sir, if you are not a cur and a coward, as well as a traitor, I say, follow me!

GRACE. [*Seizing John and falling at his feet*] No, no! He shall not go! There is murder in your face. Ah, in the name of Heaven, of your own salvation, of my breaking heart, I beg, beseech, entreat, here grovelling at your feet, pity, mercy for him! [*John flings her off. She falls with a piercing cry, unconscious, to the ground*]

WILL. [*Bending toward her*] Monster! You have killed her!

JOHN. [*Interposing*] Stand back! [*He points to door*]

ACT IV.

SCENE: *A study in Professor Tracy's house, opening upon the beach. The stage is divided a little L. of C. To L., the interior of the Professor's study. R., the beach. A door communicating between them. To L., downstage in study, the Professor's writing table, with chair. To R., on beach, the back of two bathing houses, near them some low rocks forming seats. To L., near the house, a rustic bench. In background a pool in the beach, masked by low rocks beyond. Sky and ocean. As curtain rises the Baron is discovered on rustic seat, L.R., Fitzgiggle and Maudle on rock. Mrs. Bunker is seated in the sand, C., playing with shells. Bunker is near her, disentangling a fishline. The Professor's study is empty.*

BUNK. [*Crossing to Fitzgiggle and pointing to his wife*] Miss Fitzgiggle, look yonder—see that exquisite statue of simplicity.

FITZ. Yes, he, he! Lovely creature! He, he! What is she doing?

MAUDLE. Ah, Miss Fitzgiggle, when there's such bliss in assissin', who wouldn't be an ass.

FITZ. True—he, he! It must be splendid to be a donkey's wife.

BUNK. [*Kneeling near his wife*] What are you doing, seraph?

MRS. B. I vas makin' a tear leetle hole in ze sand.

BUNK. Holiness, thy name is Sophy Bunker!

MAUDLE. By the way, baron, have you heard the news about the Reverend Doolittle Highflyer?

BARON. No.

FITZ. Do let's have it.

MAUDLE. He's lost his treasure: Miss Lovewild has deserted him, she has eloped—yes, actually eloped with Mr. Stopover.

FITZ. Gracious! [*All laugh*] What a delicious match, he, he! Lovewild and Stopover, and such a splendid scandal, too. He, he!

MAUDLE. Yes, to think of those honeygushers having the courage to elope. You wouldn't elope, would you, Miss Fitzgiggle?

FITZ. He, he! [*Looking coyly at Maudle*] I can't tell—he, he! We young creatures are so weak, and you men are so strong. Ah! I hope no one will ever tempt me.

MAUDLE. Ho! No danger of that.

FITZ. Sir!

MAUDLE. That is, nothing could tempt you to elope! No! [*All laugh*]

BUNK. [*Crossing to Maudle*] My dear sir, please be careful what you say before my wife. She was brought up in a convent. I would not have her guileless nature polluted. No, sir, not for five dollars!

MAUDLE. What the deuce do you mean?

BUNK. Why, sir, such a word as "elope" should never be uttered in her presence. I pray you, forbear. Spare her innocence!

MAUDLE. Oh! Of course.

BUNK. [*Going, seeing a shell on the beach*] Oh, what a lovely shell for Sophy! [*He stoops over to pick it up. A gun is fired nearby. Bunker falls back in the sand. The women shriek. All rise. Mrs. Bunker rushes to her husband*]

MRS. B. Mon Dieu! My teer! Are you keel'd dead away?

BUNK. [*Rising*] Not quite, but who the devil fired that shot? [*Enter Doctor, R.C., in shooting costume*]

DR. S. I say, friends, did you see any game flying this way?

ALL. [*Indignantly*] No!

DR. S. Strange! I'm sure I heard some wild geese scream somewhere round here. [*Exeunt all but Mr. and Mrs. Bunker. Doctor crosses to them*] Your most obedient, madame. Well, Bunker, what luck at fishing?

BUNK. [*Down R.C.*] I'm just going to try. I bet five dollars I catch the heaviest blackfish ever caught on this coast.

DR. S. You seem to believe in your own luck.

BUNK. So I do. The best fish always take my hook. Look at my wife—there's a catch for you!

DR. S. For me? Thank you! Keep her for yourself. [*Going*] I wish I could find some way to drive this pair out of this place. [*Enter Baron, L.I.E.*] Ah, baron, a word with you. You know all about this Mrs. Bunker, I believe?

BARON. Vell, I tink I do.

DR. S. I've just heard she's been raising Ned at my friend Fleming's house. She called on his wife and told her something that has simply resurrected Cain!

BARON. Ees dat so?

DR. S. Yes, I wish the creature could be driven away from here.

BARON. [*Taking Doctor's arm and going off*] Ho! Leaf dot to me! I tink I can manage dat ferry qvick! [*Exeunt Baron and Doctor*]

MRS. B. [*Going to Bunker*] Boonky, tear! I wants to ask you somesings.

BUNK. Ask, angel, and I will answer!

MRS. B. [*With mock innocence*] Tell me vat zat vord "elopes" means?

BUNK. [*Aside*] Now how can I answer that? How can I endanger her angelic ignorance? I won't—damn it, I won't!

MRS. B. Vy for you do not answer me so much all ze time? I say, vat does "elopes" means?

BUNK. Ah! Nothing important. It means a—ahem—to take a little walk.

MRS. B. Oh! "Elopes" means to take a little valk?

BUNK. Precisely!

MRS. B. Zank you, my tear. Now you may go and feesh. I vill wait for you 'ere. Be back soon!

BUNK. Yes, it's getting late, I won't be long. [*As he goes*] If every wife was such an innocent angel as that, what a Heaven this earth would be! [*Exit, R.*]

MRS. B. [*Looking after him*] Eef efery husband was such a pig fool as zat, vat a 'appy sinners ve wemin would be! [*Mrs. Bunker sits with a sigh on a rock*] Ah! Eef I could only see Jean once more alone! [*Falls into a reverie. Enter Baron, R.U.E. He comes up behind Mrs. Bunker quietly*]

BARON. Madame La Motte!

MRS. B. [*Springs up with a scream*] Ah! Mon Dieu! [*Turning and seeing Baron*] Ah! Baron, vy for you makes me so frighten?

BARON. Yous no me rekkonaissiez, ma'am?

MRS. B. I don't understand Sherman, French—speak English, baron!

BARON. Ah, ferry vell, but you don't recognize me, matam?

MRS. B. Oh, yes I do. You are ze Baron von Spiegel.

BARON. No, matam, to you, I am not de Baron von Spiegel, an' to me you are not Matam Sophie Boonkair!

MRS. B. Oh, mon Dieu! Vat you mean?

BARON. I mean dat you vas Marie La Motte.

MRS. B. Vat? I Marie La Motte?

BARON. Yaas, and I vas vonce to you, George Senderback!

MRS. B. [*Going*] Ho! You vas crazy mad!

BARON. [*Seizing her arm*] Shtop!

MRS. B. Let me go, or I vill scream!

BARON. If you makes von noise, I vill expose to your hoospand!

MRS. B. He vill belief nosing!

BARON. Den I vill gif you to de bolice!

MRS. B. You 'ave no rights, you 'ave no proofs!

BARON. Yaas, I 'af. Here. [*Seizing her arm*] Here on your arm. See, here is de scar of de knife of Alfred Dumont, who plowed out hees prains for you!

MRS. B. Oh, mon Dieu!

BARON. Here ees de ring on your finger vat I gif you meinselbst.

MRS. B. Oh, mon Dieu!

BARON. I af at my room de leetle sheck vat you forge my name to in Baden!

MRS. B. [*Recovering herself and looking at him cheerfully*] Vy my tear George, is zat you? I am so glad to see you! [*Extending both hands to him*]

BARON. [*Putting them away*] De tuyfel you vas?

MRS. B. Yes, 'ow you have change! I vood not 'ave known you!

BARON. Boot you recognize me, now, eh?

MRS. B. Oh, yes, boot George, do shafe off zese 'airs—I loves you a great deal more vizout zese 'airs!

BARON. Ho! I do not wants you to lofe me. I 'af 'ad ennuf of dat.

MRS. B. Vat you vant zen?

BARON. I vant you to do joost vat I tell you.

MRS. B. Oh, I vill, George, efery time!

BARON. You must leaf dis blace.

MRS. B. Right away.

BARON. You must keep away from Mr. Fleming.

MRS. B. Ho! Forevermore!

BARON. An' you moost make your hoosband square dat leetle sheck!

MRS. B. Oh! I vill make zat ole donkey do anysing!

BARON. Den, coom vit me, an' I vill tell you all about de oder tings you must do!

MRS. B. [*Sentimentally*] I vill go viz you anyveres, George. [*Enter Bunker, with fishline in hand, R.U.E.*]

BUNK. Hullo, here! Say, where are you going?

MRS. B. Oh! I vas only going to elopes viz de baron.

BARON. [*Staring*] Gott in Himmel!

BUNK. [*Aghast, falling on garden seat*] What!

MRS. B. Yes, I am only going to "elope" viz ze baron.

BUNK. [*Falls back as they go out*] What does she mean? Oh, I see, she takes my definition of the word. [*Laughing nervously*] Ha, ha! Unsuspecting child, ha, ha! How she startled me! Ha, ha! A good joke! [*Suddenly sobering*] But I think I'll follow them. A Dutch baron is dangerous to innocence like hers. I wouldn't have her elope—no indeed, not for five dollars! [*Exit, L.I.E. After a slight pause Mrs. Tracy enters the study, looks about her and approaches the Professor*]

MRS. T. Charles! What can have become of Will?

TRACY. [*Looking up*] I'm sure I don't know!

MRS. T. He went to see Grace and hasn't returned yet. He has missed his dinner.

TRACY. Perhaps he stopped to dine with Mr. Fleming?

MRS. T. No! He never does that. You know he's queer and proud about dining there. I'm getting anxious. It's late in the afternoon now. What if he has had another sunstroke? He's so careless about himself!

TRACY. [*Starting up*] My conscience! So he is! What's to be done? [*Grace enters beach, L.U.E. Crosses to door of study. Tracy suddenly picks up his hat*] I'll go and look for him, mother. I'll have a run over the beach, and then go up to Mr. Fleming's. [*Tracy opens the door, Grace enters*] Why, here's Grace, herself. [*Stage grows darker. Night slowly comes on*]

MRS. T. [*Embracing Grace*] Ah! My darling!

GRACE. [*Feverishly*] Mother, I have come here to seek shelter, protection, with you.

MRS. T. What do you mean, dear?

GRACE. I have come back to you for the rest of my life. I would rather die than play any longer the hideous farce of being John Fleming's wife.

TRACY. Are you mad?

GRACE. Yes. Mad to be free of this hollow mockery called marriage—of these cruel bonds that bind me to a man that fascinates my senses and revolts my soul!

MRS. T. Grace, Grace, we do not understand!

GRACE. Well, I will be frank, I will explain. But first tell me, where is Will?

MRS. T. We don't know, dear. He hasn't been home all day.

GRACE. Ah, heavens! What if they have met! What if he is murdered!

MR. and MRS. T. Murdered!

GRACE. [*In nervous horror*] Mother, father, a terrible dread oppresses me. Take me inside; I will tell you all, then you will know what to do. [*John appears on beach*]

JOHN. Grace has left my house with this villain, Tracy. She is here, hiding from me. She will refuse to see me. How can I reach her? How induce her to return? [*Thinks. Enter Tracy from his study, in agitation*]

TRACY. Ah! Her story appalls me! Now to find John Fleming! [*He rushes out of house and meets John on beach, C. Looks hard at him a moment in the dusk, and then explodes*] Ha! You're the man I want! My son, sir! My son! What have you done with my son?

JOHN. I know nothing of your son, except that he is a scoundrel! I come to demand my wife. Where is *she*?

TRACY. Here, in our protection! She has told us all. My son has disappeared. You and he were to meet. You have met. Villain, where is he?

JOHN. Sir, we have not met. We are to meet tonight.

TRACY. Ah! You are to meet. Oh, I understand, you mean to murder him!

JOHN. Sir! Let us bandy words no longer. I am not an assassin!

TRACY. What do you want of my boy then?

JOHN. The satisfaction of an outraged man.

TRACY. How has he outraged you?

JOHN. He has stolen my wife out of my house. He has cunningly crept into her heart and induced her to fly from me, to dishonor my name.

TRACY. No! Not to dishonor your name, but to fly from the dishonor she found in your house.

JOHN. What dishonor?

TRACY. The dishonor forced on her by you: of receiving your mistress beneath your roof!

JOHN. [*Recoiling, amazed*] What!

TRACY. Yes, this creature you call Sophy, dared to enter your house, invited by you, dared to boast openly, shamelessly, smilingly of her relations to you.

JOHN. [*Turning aside in horror*] Great heavens! I see it all, this is that woman's revenge!

TRACY. [*Crossing to him, angrily*] Oh, you prate of *your* wrongs. What are they compared to those of your wife? Think what a life hers was three

months ago. Then she was beaming with glorious hopes; radiant with innocent dreams of her happy life to come with you. What is she now? A woman growing old with grief, lying yonder in her old home, prostrate with despair, crushed with humiliation!

JOHN. And is this my work?

TRACY. Yes! Ah, what right had you to marry innocence? You, who had steeped yourself in all the polluting pleasures of this world? Were you a fit companion for spotlessness? Was your breast a fit pillow for purity?

JOHN. Sir, no more. I realize enough already what sort of man I am. I tell you, sir, if death could purge me of my past and make me worthy of Grace Fleming's love, I would face the pangs of a hundred thousand deaths!

TRACY. [*Amazed*] What! You love her, then?

JOHN. I revere—I worship her!

TRACY. Why, I thought yours was a heart of ashes?

JOHN. It was once! But the magic influence of her guileless nature awakened the dying embers that lay beneath the ashes of my heart. It kindled those embers into the steadfast fire of an honest love!

TRACY. Then how could you make Grace the victim of insult from this French fiend?

JOHN. That was not my fault. This very day I turned that woman from my doors. In revenge she has called upon my wife and deceived her with some wicked lie!

TRACY. If this be so, all is well! Tell Grace. She is generous; doubtless she will forgive, perhaps forget.

JOHN. [*Starting towards house*] Let me go to her! I will explain all, at once!

TRACY. [*Checking him*] No! Not now! She is exhausted by her suffering. Wait till tomorrow. I will make a bargain with you. Promise not to upbraid my passionate boy, and I will agree to plead your cause with Grace myself. Will you promise?

JOHN. With all my heart!

TRACY. Then goodnight! I can't imagine what's become of Will. I must go and look for him. So, goodnight, and don't forget your promise! [*Exit, L. As Tracy goes, John sinks upon rustic bench near house*]

JOHN. Now I understand why she has deserted my house. My past has risen to wreck my future! I fear the hope I once had of winning her heart is now a mad one. [*Falls into a reverie. The moon rises, large and red, out of the fog. Will appears, L.U.E. John rises; the two men confront each other a moment in silence*]

WILL. I thought, sir, we were to meet at the other end of the beach?

JOHN. There is no need of that meeting now!

WILL. [*Impetuously*] Stop, sir. You appointed that meeting, you have no right to shirk its consequences now. I have heard that you are a brave man; unless hearsay lies, you will step here and give me satisfaction.

JOHN. [*Contemptuously*] Give you satisfaction? And for what, pray?

WILL. I loved Grace Loring long before you ever knew her. You have robbed me of her, and you have made her miserable. If you have a single spark of manhood you will set her free; for she is mine!

JOHN. That is false; Grace Fleming is a pure woman, and my wife!

WILL. Yes! She is a pure woman, but not your wife, except in name. If you claim her by the right of human law, I claim her by the far more sacred right of her love for me!

JOHN. [*Staring, then speaking with suppressed pain*] Good heavens, man! Are you sure of what you say, that she loves you?

WILL. I am as sure of her love for me, as I am of my own love for her. You stand between her and her happiness. You bound her; you must unbind her!

JOHN. Unbind her?

WILL. Yes!

JOHN. And how can that be done?

WILL. There is but one clean way to break her fetters. A life for a life! [*John looks up*] One of us must die!

JOHN. Do you propose a duel?

WILL. I do; a duel to the death!

JOHN. Have you considered the effect of a duel between you and me on Grace herself? The world will say you were the lover; that she was false to me; society will punish her for your sins!

WILL. True! But there is one sort of duel that can save the dead from ridicule and shield the living from the nagging tongues of idle fools! Have you the courage to face it?

JOHN. [*Shrugging his shoulders*] Well—perhaps.

WILL. Well, then, one of us must die—by an accident.

JOHN. An accident? I don't understand!

WILL. It is very simple. One of us must die by an apparent accident. We will draw lots; they can decide which one of us shall live. He who draws death—

JOHN. Must kill himself?

WILL. Well?

JOHN. [*Looking at Will earnestly*] You say that you love Grace?

WILL. I do.

JOHN. And that she—loves you?

WILL. She does.

JOHN. Of *that* you are perfectly certain?

WILL. Perfectly.

JOHN. [*After a pause*] And so you propose to risk your life—the life she loves—in drawing the lot of death with me?

WILL. That is my proposition!

JOHN. What if I refuse?

WILL. Then I shall know that the world lies; that you are not a brave man, but a base coward.

JOHN. Enough—I refuse!

WILL. What? Are you cur then, as well as libertine? [*John shrugs his shoulders*] Ah! Do not imagine that cowardice will help to hold this woman as your wife. No—if you will not consent to free her in a manly way, then I'll find some other way to break her chains. She shall not long be bound to such a thing as you! [*Exit angrily back of house*]

JOHN. [*Looking after him*] He'll be sorry for those words tomorrow. He little thinks that I refused because I would not risk a life she loves. So it is all true; she loves another, and my hope must die. The old weariness comes back upon me! What is life now to one like me? Nothing but a farce; a bore, a curse. Well! Let it go, then, like other worthless things, to oblivion. Yes—to its eternal rest. [*Enter Robert, with lantern*]

ROBERT. Ah, sir! Here you are. The doctor's at the house, sir, anxious to see you. He sent me here to find you.

JOHN. [*Trying to be cheerful*] What a beautiful night it is, Robert!

ROBERT. [*Puzzled*] Yes—yes, sir!

JOHN. So clear and mild. Yes, it's a capital night for a swim, isn't it?

ROBERT. A swim, sir, at this hour?

JOHN. Yes, I'm tired. The water looks tempting. By Jove, I believe it'll do me good.

ROBERT. But, sir, the doctor's waiting to see you.

JOHN. Oh, that's all right. Go back and say I'll join him as soon as I've had a bath. [*Robert stares*] Well, don't stand there staring like an owl! Go and give my message.

ROBERT. [*Going*] All right, sir.

JOHN. Stay! Hold your lantern a moment. [*Robert holds lantern. John, foot on rustic bench, facing L., produces a notebook, tears out a leaf, writes a note; then hands note to Robert*] After you have seen the doctor, return and deliver this note to Mrs. Fleming. You will find her here at Professor Tracy's.

ROBERT. Hadn't I better deliver the note first, sir?

JOHN. No! Do precisely what I tell you. I have my reasons! [*Robert is going. John stops him*] Robert!

ROBERT. Sir!

JOHN. [*Taking his hand*] Robert, you've been a good faithful friend to me. Thanks, old man, thanks! [*Retires upstage*]

ROBERT. What's come over him, I wonder? Something's wrong here. I'll deliver my message and return on the double-quick to find him! [*Exit, L.I.E.*]

JOHN. Now to do it! One little plunge, and then, rest for me! Happiness for her! [*Looking up at house*] She is there, at peace, God bless her! And I— [*Covers his face with his hands, suddenly withdraws them*] What! Tears in John Fleming's blasé eyes? Is it possible? Who would believe it? Not she! Not she! [*Starting toward house*] I must—I will see her once more. [*Gets to door, almost enters, then turns back*] No, I dare not! Parting would unman me. No! I must do this thing at once, before my heart can make of me a weakling and a fool! [*He resolutely steps R., turns, looks back and then, lifting his hands, waves them towards the house, saying in a broken voice*] God bless you, Grace! God bless you, precious—precious wife of my dying heart! [*Exit, L.U.E. Grace and Mrs. Tracy enter the study with a light*]

GRACE. Father has not returned yet. There is no news of Will. Oh, mother, my heart is sick with horrible presentiments! [*Throws herself into chair, L. of table, and buries her face in her arms on the table. Will appears outside, R.U.E.*]

MRS. T. If this suspense lasts much longer I shall lose my senses! I must see if anyone is in sight. [*As she opens door, Will appears. She recoils with a cry, and then clasps him in her arms*] Ah! He is here!

GRACE. [*Starting up*] Thank Heaven! [*Eagerly to him*] And John—Mr. Fleming—have you met?

WILL. Yes.

GRACE. Have you quarreled?

WILL. No!

GRACE. Ah! Heaven is good, it has heard my prayers!

WILL. My throat is parched. Give me something to drink. [*Mrs. Tracy pours out a glass of wine from decanter upstage, and hands it to him. Tracy appears outside, L. Will swallows wine greedily. Enter Tracy in study*]

TRACY. Ah! I can find no trace—[*Suddenly seeing Will*] Ah, ha! Here you are, young villain! How dare you frighten me out of my wits like this?

MRS. T. There, there, dear, don't bother him. He's not well. Leave him alone!

TRACY. [*Crossing to Will, aside to him*] Have you encountered Mr. Fleming?

WILL. Yes.

TRACY. Did he blow you up?

WILL. No!

TRACY. Good! He kept his promise. I'll keep mine. Where's Grace? Ah, here you are, young woman. Well, madam, I've news for you, grand news!

GRACE. [*Coming down*] News for me?

TRACY. Yes—I've seen your husband!

GRACE. Ah!

TRACY. Yes, and he has explained everything. You and he have both been the victims of this Bunker woman.

GRACE. It isn't true, then? She did not come by his invitation?

TRACY. No, indeed!

WILL. But how do you—?

TRACY. Will you hold your tongue, sir? Fleming told me this himself, and every tone of his voice proclaimed that he told the truth.

GRACE. [*Hiding her head in her breast*] Oh! I am so happy, so happy!

TRACY. Oh! but I've not told you the best of all yet. You see, this—

WILL. [*Rising*] But, father, do you mean to—?

TRACY. Oh, damn it! Here, if you must talk, tell the story yourself. [*Will sits again*] Now shut up or speak out! [*Throws himself into a chair upstage*]

GRACE. [*Kneeling at his feet*] There, father, Will will say no more. Go on.

TRACY. Well, then! Grace, child, your husband loves you!

GRACE. [*Amazed*] Loves me!

TRACY. Yes. Ha, ha! Think of it, here's a husband who actually loves his wife. Original creature!

GRACE. [*Looking earnestly at Tracy*] Can it be possible he loves me!

TRACY. Yes, adores you. Why, the poor fellow declared that if death could purge him of his past and make him worthy of you, he would face the pangs of a hundred thousand deaths!

GRACE. Ah! That is enough. Let me go—let me go back to him!

WILL. [*Seizing her hand and looking into her face*] Great heavens, Grace, is it possible you love him then?

GRACE. Love him? I have loved him through all, in spite of my own will! [*Enter Robert, L.I.E.*] And now that he confesses love for me, 'tis all I ask. My heart is his forever! [*Will turns away with bowed head*] I will return to him at once! [*Knock at door. Will opens the door. Enter Robert, sees Grace and crosses to her*]

ROBERT. [*Presenting note*] Mr. Fleming sent me here with this, ma'am. [*Goes up. Grace snatches note, reads and recoils with a cry, dropping note*]

WILL. [*Approaching her*] Great heavens! What is it?

GRACE. [*With a wild cry*] He is going! I see it all! He has resolved to die!

WILL. [*Picking up note, L. of her*] Ah! It is true! [*Grace rushing out-doors, is followed by others, all but Mrs. Tracy*]

GRACE. Oh, find him! Save him! Save him!

WILL. Yes, Grace, now that I know you love him, I will save him, or never return! [*Will and Robert make exit, L.I.R. Grace falls on her knees with uplifted hands*]

GRACE. Merciful Heaven! Take pity! Spare him! Save, oh, save! My love! My husband!

ACT V.

SCENE: *John Fleming's private room. To L., a large mantel, with fireplace and fire upstage beside door to John's dressing-room. To R., door to inner apartments. To L., in flat, an alcove with John's bed. Curtains to alcove nearly concealing the bed. To R., in flat, large double window, with heavy curtains closed over it. About the room the furniture appropriate to a bachelor's room; on the walls trophies of armors, pipes, pictures, statuettes, etc. C., a lounge; downstage, L., near fireplace, an elegant dressing stand with drawers. Downstage, R., a writing table, or secretary, open. As curtain rises, John is discovered lying upon the lounge. Dr. Sterling is examining him. Grace is on one side of the lounge, waiting with feverish anxiety for the verdict. Robert is seated sullenly near fire, watching jealously all that goes on. The Doctor does business of examination. Shakes his head doubtfully, passes his hand under coverings upon John's heart, places his ear near his mouth, picks up his hand and feels his pulse.*

GRACE. [*With intense anxiety*] Well?

DR. S. The pulse seems to be improving a little. [*Puts head to John's mouth again*] But his breathing is very irregular.

GRACE. He is still in danger, then?

DR. S. Yes, I fear he is.

GRACE. Oh, misery—this suspense is terrible. [*After a pause*] Ah!

DR. S. His symptoms are improving. [*Suddenly starting and placing his ear near John's mouth again*] Ah, ha!

GRACE. [*Eagerly*] What is it?

DR. S. His breathing's getting better. His pulse is stronger. Ah, ha! It gets better and better.

GRACE. Is he safe yet?

DR. S. [*After a pause, dropping John's hand and rising*] Yes, I think I may say he is—safe now.

GRACE. [*Falling on her knees and laying her face on John's breast with a sob*] Thank Heaven!

DR. S. [*Aside, looking at Grace*] Hm, her symptoms are as encouraging as his. I'm glad at last to see her where she belongs—on her husband's breast. [*Crosses to desk, sits and writes. Grace rises, smooths the coverings about John tenderly, then crosses to Doctor*]

GRACE. Doctor, do you think he will be all right when he awakes?

DR. S. All right? How do you mean?

GRACE. Will his mind be clear?

DR. S. I hope so.

GRACE. Do you think he will know me?

DR. S. Impossible to say. His mind may wander somewhat at first. Oh, don't be frightened. He'll soon be himself again. I have just written a prescription that will make him all right. [*Rising*] I will go and have it prepared.

GRACE. Cannot Robert go?

DR. S. No, the druggist will be in bed at this hour. He knows me; I can rout him out quicker than Robert. [*Crossing to door*] I will return immediately. Watch John till I get back.

GRACE. [*Sitting near John and taking his hand*] I will not leave his side an instant.

DR. S. [*Returning to Grace*] By the bye, did you say it was Mr. Tracy who saved John?

GRACE. Yes, at the risk of his own life, Will was forced to dive several times in order to bring John's body to the surface. When at last he did this, Robert pulled him out of the water into the boat.

DR. S. I am glad to know this. I have wronged Mr. Tracy in my own mind. He is a noble fellow.

GRACE. So he is. Almost as noble as *he* is—[*Pointing to John*] and that's saying a good deal.

DR. S. I'm glad you think so, but I'm off—don't leave that man till I return.

GRACE. No danger—a whole regiment couldn't drag me from his side. [*Exit Doctor*]

ROBERT. [*Grumbling, aside*] Hum! How awfully sweet she is on my master all of a sudden! I don't like it—this kind o' bouncin' about don't seem nat'ral! [*Knocks come on the window*]

GRACE. [*Starting*] What's that? [*Knocks repeated*]

ROBERT. Someone tappin' on the window, ma'am.

GRACE. See who it is! [*Robert crosses to window, pulls aside the curtain and opens it. Will appears*]

ROBERT. [*Gruffly*] What do you want?

WILL. I wish to see Mrs. Fleming.

GRACE. Who is it, Robert?

ROBERT. It's Mr. Tracy, ma'am.

GRACE. Ask him to come in.

ROBERT. [*Business of asking Will and getting answer*] He says he can't come in, ma'am. Wants you to step here and see him, ma'am.

GRACE. [*Rising*] What can he want—that he disturbs me at such an hour? [*Crosses to window, Robert crosses to John*] Well, Will, here I am.

WILL. Grace, I start by the train at daylight for New York.

GRACE. You are going away?

WILL. Yes, in a few minutes. I have something very important to say to you before I go. Will you join me on the terrace for a moment?

GRACE. How can I leave him now?

WILL. I will not detain you long.

GRACE. But see how he lies there, as though he were dead.

WILL. [*Hurt*] Oh, very well, it's all right, no matter now—good-by.

GRACE. [*Seizing him as he is about to go*] No—I won't let you leave me like this. Go to the terrace—I'll meet you there instantly. [*Will disappears, Grace crosses to John, fusses about him a while, places a shawl of her own over him, then turns to Robert*] Robert, I'm going out upon the terrace a moment. When you see the least change in Mr. Fleming, call me instantly, do you hear?

ROBERT. [*Gruffly*] All right, ma'am.

GRACE. I shall hurry back. [*Exit*]

ROBERT. [*Shaking fist after her*] Oh! You nasty hypocrite—pretending to care for him, and then leaving him like this—half-dead, to go out and see your lover! [*Pulls Grace's shawl off John*] Nothin' she's put on him shall stay there, anyway. No, we won't have no more of her nonsense about him. [*Going to bed and getting a coverlid*] No. We'll cover him with his own things. [*Taking off his coat*] Yes, and some of mine, too. [*He lays his coat over John's feet. As he does so, John sighs. Robert starts and listens*] Eh! What's that? [*John half sighs, half groans*] Good Lord, he's wakin' up—he's wakin' up. [*John's hand moves, then his head turns over on his pillow so that his face is turned to the audience*] Ah! He's comin' to. [*Kneels near*] Yes, an' I'll be the first one he'll see, as he comes back from his grave. [*He watches John eagerly, as he slowly awakes. Soft music*]

JOHN. [*Rises on one elbow, and stares about him bewildered. At last his eyes rest on Robert in surprise. He pauses a moment with fixed eyes, then speaks*] Robert, is that you?

ROBERT. Yes, master. Thank God you know me! [*Kisses John's hand*]

JOHN. I thought I was dreaming. [*Looks about him, then lays his hand on Robert's shoulder*] Robert, what has happened?

ROBERT. Oh, master, you've been tryin' to drown yourself.

JOHN. [*Aside, after a pause*] I remember now. [*Aloud*] Robert, where is my wi—, Mrs. Fleming?

ROBERT. [*Pointing outside*] Out yonder—on the terrace with him.

JOHN. With Mr. Tracy?

ROBERT. Yes.

JOHN. [*Falls back on pillow*] With him—while I lie here like this? Cannot spare me a single moment, even at such a time? [*Puts out his hand and draws Robert to him*] Tell me, who was it that pulled me out of the water?

ROBERT. I did, master, I—who love you more than my own life.

JOHN. Dear old friend, if you had been my worst enemy you would not have done me a more cruel wrong.

ROBERT. Oh, master, don't talk like this. [*Wiping his eyes*] I can't stand it—I can't stand it!

JOHN. [*Rising on one elbow*] There, there, old man, it's all right, it's all right. Give me a glass of wine. [*Robert crosses quickly and pours out a glass of wine from decanter on dressing-stand*] So she is with him now! And there! Ah, why couldn't they let me die in peace? [*Robert hands him the wine. He drinks and returns the glass*] Thanks—go to my dressing-room, look in the drawer of my bureau and bring me a handkerchief. [*Exit Robert by door upstage, L., John covers his face a moment with his hands, then sits up half-way on the lounge*] Oh, life is torture now. I cannot—I will not endure it. No, if they wouldn't let me die in one way, I'll find another and a surer way. [*Looks about the room; his eyes fall upon the dressing-table*] Yes, there—in yonder stand. I can do it now. [*He is about to throw off his coverings, but Robert enters*] Ah! How can I get rid of Robert?

ROBERT. [*Who has paused to open the handkerchief and open it out*] Here you are, master. What else would you like?

JOHN. [*After a pause*] Go to the dining room, and look in the cupboard under the buffet. You will find there among a number of bottles one marked a—a—Van Secthman's Tonic.

ROBERT. Well, I've heard of all sorts o' tonics, but never none like that before.

JOHN. Go and bring that bottle here—the tonic will do me good.

ROBERT. [*Going*] All right, sir. I'll go and be back like a streak o' lightnin'. [*Pauses at door*] Shall I call her back? No—I won't. I'll be back in a jiffy myself. [*Exit. The instant Robert goes, John throws off his coverings, totters to the stand, unlocks a drawer, pulls out a revolver; totters back to lounge, cocks the pistol. As he does so, Grace enters. John falls back on lounge, and hastily conceals the pistol in his hand beneath him*]

GRACE. [*Rushing to him*] Ah! You are awake—alive—at last!

JOHN. [*Warning her away*] Stand back! Go! Leave me! Leave me!

GRACE. Do you not know me?

JOHN. I do—you are Grace Fleming, my wi—No, no, not that now—

GRACE. [*Kneeling*] Ah, I see you despise me, you will never forgive me.

JOHN. Spare me a scene, madam. Go back, go back to him.

GRACE. Go back to whom?

JOHN. To your lo—to Mr. Tracy.

GRACE. He has gone away.

JOHN. [*Amazed*] Gone away?

GRACE. Yes, and left this message for you. He said, "Tell Mr. Fleming that I shall never return until I can take his hand and be glad to call him Grace Loring's husband."

JOHN. And he has gone alone?

GRACE. [*Weeping*] Yes, poor dear noble fellow!

JOHN. He did wrong. You should have gone with him.

GRACE. I should have gone with him, and why?

JOHN. Because you love him.

GRACE. Yes, indeed I do. I never loved him so deeply as I do at this hour.

JOHN. [*Bitterly*] That confession is unnecessary, madam; it is cruel, cruel.

GRACE. Cruel?

JOHN. Yes, do you not see that it is worse than death to me?

GRACE. No—you do not understand me. If I love him more deeply than ever now, it is because he risked *his* life to save *yours*. It is because he saved the life of my life—the heart of my heart—my husband.

JOHN. [*Amazed*] Am I dreaming? Is it you who say this? Is it possible that *you—you love me*?

GRACE. Yes—more than I dare confess. [*Covers her face with her hands*]

JOHN. [*Starting up*] No, no! It cannot be! [*His pistol falls from his hand upon the floor. Grace starts, sees it, and springs upon it with a shriek*]

GRACE. Great heavens! You were going to—! [*John's head falls upon his breast*] Ah! *Why* would you do this wicked deed?

JOHN. Because I love you, and would set you free.

GRACE. Ah! It is not your death, but your life—and your love that sets me free.

JOHN. [*Rising*] Oh, have mercy! Do not deceive me now. It would drive me mad. Do you mean what you say? Is it true, is it true that you love me?

GRACE. True as Heaven's light!

JOHN. [*Folding her in his arms*] Ah Grace! Grace—my wife—my wife!

GRACE. [*Sobbing upon his breast*] Oh! I am so happy—so happy! [*Enter Robert, tugging in a basket of bottles. He enters with his back to John and Grace, and does not see them till he gets C.*]

ROBERT. I couldn't find that infernal Fan Sickman's Tonic, so I brought the whole lot of bottles, so you might choose for yourself—and—[*Turning and seeing Grace in John's arms, he recoils in amazement*] Good Lord, bless us!

JOHN. So he has, John, he has sent us one of his angels.

ROBERT. [*Aside*] He's gone mad! [*Aloud*] Master, but you forget your tonic.

JOHN. [*Kissing Grace*] No, Robert, but I have my tonic now. [*Enter Mr. and Mrs. Tracy*]

TRACY. [*Starting and pointing to John and Grace*] By all the decapods, mother! Look at that. There's a picture for you.

MRS. T. Yes, indeed—the sweetest picture in the world, dear, a wife in her husband's arms. [*Throws herself into the Professor's arms*]

TRACY. [*Shouting to John*] Ah, ha, young man! So you have come to your senses?

JOHN. I have, sir, in more ways than one. This saint has raised me from the dead. [*Enter Dr. Sterling and Baron*]

DR. S. Good heavens! Where's the sick man?

JOHN. On his own legs and in his wife's arms.

BARON. [*Advancing*] Pardon me vor making sooch a early call, sir, poot—te toctor dought I'd petter come and gif you te news. Von vord, my frien'—in brivate! [*Grace leaves John and joins Mr. and Mrs. Tracy and the Doctor. The Baron looks at John mysteriously*] Vell, she's gone.

JOHN. Who's gone?

BARON. Mrs. Poonker!

JOHN. Oh! Where has she gone?

BARON. To Pallyhack, dat ees out of your vay.

JOHN. Thank the gods!

BARON. And me, too, me too—[*Producing a paper*] Dare, take dat. Dat's a leetle sheck, a pad sheck for money, poot a goot sheck for mischief. Eef dat

voman Poonker effer potheres you again, joost shake dat at her, ant she vill pe sure to squetattle like mat.

JOHN. Baron, I never appreciated you before; you are a noble fellow.

BARON. Me—a nople fellow! Ha, ha! Dat's voon poog—dat's perfectly ridiculous.

MRS. T. [*Pushing curtains back from the window*] Ah, see, the night has passed—the light is breaking—dawn has come!

JOHN. [*Taking Grace in his arms*] Yes—the dawn of a new and happy life for Grace and me!

CURTAIN

IN SPITE OF ALL

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

(1885)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ALICE CLANDENNING

STELLA, *prima donna of the comic opera*

BESSIE, *Mrs. Clandenning's maid*

LOUISE, *Stella's maid*

CARROLL CLANDENNING

HERR ANTONIUS KRAFT, *impresario*

MR. HARTMANN, *jeweler*

JACK HARRINGTON, *the brother**

CALL-BOY OF THE THEATRE

SCENES

ACT I: THE DISCOVERY. BOUDOIR AT CARROLL'S HOUSE ON FIFTH AVENUE.

ACT II: THE CONFIRMATION. STELLA'S DRESSING-ROOM AT THE OPERA.

ACT III: THE APPEAL. BOUDOIR AT CARROLL'S HOUSE.

ACT IV: IN SPITE OF ALL. BOUDOIR AT CARROLL'S HOUSE.

TIME: THE PRESENT (1885).

PLACE: NEW YORK CITY.

* See footnote on page *xii*.

ACT I.

SCENE: *Boudoir at Carroll's house on Fifth Avenue. Bessie discovered poking fire, C., her back to audience. Jack heard singing outside, R.*

BESS. [*Turns*] There's Mr. Jack! Back again from college! Always singin' and always full of fun. [*Goes down to table, L. Jack enters in full evening dress, R., humming; goes to glass, up L., fixes necktie, and dances a few steps of a breakdown. Bessie looks at him a moment, and then bursts into a laugh, her back to audience; lights lamp on table*]

JACK. [*At glass, turning*] What are you laughing at?

BESS. Beg pardon, Mr. Jack, couldn't help it; you did look so funny, dancing afore the glass in them clothes.

JACK. Yes, of course—I dare say. This is my first suit of solemn black. How do I look? [*Still looking in mirror*]

BESS. Oh! Just lovely, Mr. Jack! [*Stops to examine him*]

JACK. Mashy, don't I?

BESS. Very.

JACK. Good! If I can only get a chance to see her, I'll sail in heavy. [*Warms hands at fire, back to audience*]

BESS. See who?

JACK. [*Turns*] Stella—the bewildering Stella. [*Stands, back to fire, hands in pockets. Bessie goes to piano, arranges music*] Yes, the prima donna of the Opéra Bouffe. Ah! If I could only mash her a bit, as she does all the rest of the world, I'd be the proudest chappie on earth. [*Down to lounge, R.*]

BESS. Oh, sir, ain't you ashamed! [*Goes up to mirror, L., arranging table in it*]

JACK. Of what?

BESS. Goin' to see awful bouf' girls. It's wicked—you so young, too.

JACK. Young! That's the time to be wicked; when you're old it's too late—it won't work. [*Sits on lounge*]

BESS. Dear me! Where did you ever get such notions? [*Comes C.*]

JACK. At college, pussie, you learn everything—from mathematics to love-making.

BESS. [*C.*] What! Do they teach love-making at college?

JACK. Of course! The love class is the largest of all.

BESS. Who's the teacher?

JACK. Well, the best professor of that art in our college is in the theological department. He teaches by example at church, on Sundays. The speed with which that man can mash a miss of sixteen, just beats Maud S.* all out. [*Rises, goes C.*]

BESS. Well! Well! How does he do it?

JACK. Hum! You're awful pretty. I'll show you, some day—but it's a long and peculiar course, and I'm in a hurry. Where's my beloved brother-in-law? [*Strolls up to window, up L.*]

BESS. [*Goes R.*] At dinner.

JACK. Why, it's almost time to go! [*Comes down to table, L.*]

BESS. Is he going out again, sir?

JACK. [*Leaning over chair at table*] Yes, he's going to the opera with me, to see Stella.

BESS. Oh, dear! Dear! Dear! My poor mistress!

JACK. What's the matter with her?

BESS. Well, Mr. Jack! I should think you'd see.

JACK. See what?

BESS. How unhappy she is.

JACK. Unhappy! Nonsense! She has everything in the world a woman can want. [*Sits at table*]

BESS. Except her husband. He's away every single night.

JACK. Bessie, listen to me. Mrs. Clandenning is my sister, Alice. I love her dearly, but I admire her husband as much as I love her, for he is the ideal man of the world, who gives to his wife wealth, to his club, wit, and to himself, nothing but the gentlemanly indulgence of a casual mash.

BESS. Oh! But mashing for a married man!

JACK. [*Rises*] "How sad, and bad, and mad it is—but then—how it is sweet!"—Browning. Yes, Bessie, your master and mistress are a pair of fools. [*Comes C.*]

BESS. What!

JACK. She, a simple country girl, was a fool to marry a city man, and he, a handsome bachelor, was a fool to marry at all at his age.

BESS. His age! Why, he's over thirty!

JACK. Precisely—but when a man's such a swell, and used to having his own way, he's a born fool to marry before he's fifty. [*Strolls up to fire*]

BESS. [*Crosses to R.*] Fifty! Bless me! Who'd have him at that age? [*Arranging ornaments*]

JACK. A whole raft o' the best in the land; so long as he's rich. [*Back to fire*]

* Cf. Note on page 234.

BESS. Mr. Jack, I'm afraid you're a very cynical young man.

JACK. Cynical! Do you know what kind of a man that is?

BESS. That's an idiot who thinks a man can buy God's love with the devil's money. [*At sofa*]

JACK. [*Coming down, C.*] Oh! You blasphemous little villain! If you were not such a little beauty, I'd be tempted to turn my back on you; but beauty, my dear Bessie, makes us warm even to bad luck itself, and so, bad as you are, I forgive you. [*Puts arm about her waist*]

BESS. What are you doing, sir! [*He puts right arm about her, she struggles*]

JACK. Practising.

BESS. [*Struggling*] Oh, sir, hands off! [*Puts both hands on his right arm*]

JACK. [*With his left hand turns her around, taking her hands off his arm and holding them*] That's what I say—hands off—[*Holding hers*] and lips on. [*Kisses her, she screams. Enter Carroll, L., puts hat on table, L.*]

CARROLL. Ah, ha! [*Jack and Bessie separate in dismay. She goes R., he goes up, L., looks out window, whistling. Carroll comes C.*] Bessie!

BESS. Sir?

CARROLL. I'm astonished!

BESS. So am I, sir. [*Jack comes down, L., sits on piano stool*]

CARROLL. I had no idea you were so dangerous.

BESS. I, sir! Dangerous?

CARROLL. Yes. Don't do it again. [*Up to and back towards fire*]

BESS. Don't do what again, sir?

CARROLL. Don't lead this poor, innocent, susceptible boy astray.

BESS. But, sir—

CARROLL. There, there! I know—women always blame the men, but it's the women every time—eh, Jack?

JACK. Oh! That's certain! But for women, men would live untempted, un-honored, and unstrung. [*Bell rings, off R.*]

BESS. But, Mr. Carroll—

CARROLL. Bessie, there's the door. [*Points R.*]

BESS. [*Going*] The tyrant! [*Bouncing out, R. Jack thumps piano*]

CARROLL. [*Lighting a cigar*] Jack!

JACK. Yes, old man?

CARROLL. Just go down and wait for Kraft, and when he comes, bring him quietly up here.

JACK. Oh! You expect him?

CARROLL. Yes. Ask no questions—do as I tell you.

JACK. Oh! Don't fear. [*Rises, going*] Kraft! He manages Stella. That's enough—I'm his friend. [*Exit, R.*]

CARROLL. [*Looking at watch*] By Jove! I'd no idea it was so late. I must go. [*To table for hat*] I'm forgetting that bracelet I promised Stella tonight, the anniversary of her début in America. She'll never forgive me if she don't get it. I must see old Hartmann before he closes his shop. [*Starts to go, R.*]

BESS. [*Entering, R.*] If you please, sir, Mr. Hartmann, the jeweler, wishes to see you.

CARROLL. [*Starting, and aside*] Hartmann here, at my house! Never mind—[*Aloud*] Show him right up, and—stay, Bessie—not a word to my wife of his visit. If she asks for me, say I am engaged with a gentleman on business, and must not be disturbed.

BESS. Very well, sir. [*Going*] Why is he so mysterious about this jeweler? Ah! I see! It's a present—a surprise for madame. [*Exit, R.*]

CARROLL. [*Back to L. table, replacing hat on it*] I suppose old Hartmann has brought the bracelet—to this house, too! That's devilish awkward! What if my wife were to see it? Hum! I'll take good care that she don't. [*Enter Bessie, followed by Hartmann, R.*]

BESS. [*C.*] Mr. Hartmann.

CARROLL. Come in, sir. [*To Bessie*] You may go. [*Hartmann goes down, R.*]

BESS. Yes, sir. [*As she goes*] Fortunately, keyholes are convenient. [*Exit, R.*]

CARROLL. [*Lowering his voice*] Why did you bring the bracelet to this house, when I told you I preferred to call at your shop for it?

HART. [*R.*] My dear sir, I—

CARROLL. Confound it! I was recommended to you by Kraft as a man who could be trusted. You see, I did not want my wife to know, and I did not go to our family jeweler.

HART. But, my dear sir—

CARROLL. Bah! There's no use fuming now. Let me see it.

HART. But my dear Mr. Carroll, I have been trying to tell you that I have not brought it.

CARROLL. Oh!

HART. I came only to ask you to wait till tomorrow—we've had such a press of business.

CARROLL. Tomorrow! Impossible! It was intended to commemorate an important anniversary. She must have it tonight. You promised it, and you must keep your word.

HART. But, my dear sir—

CARROLL. No more, sir! The bracelet within an hour, or never! [*Hartmann shrugs his shoulders. Carroll rings bell, L. Enter Bessie, R. She comes C.*] Bessie, you may show this gentleman the way out. [*Strolls up and down-stage, L.*]

HART. [*Going*] I am sorry, sir—I should like to keep your patronage; I will push it through, if possible. [*Goes to door*]

CARROLL. If you succeed, extra pay; if you fail, never let me hear from you again.

HART. [*As he goes*] I will do my best, sir. [*Bessie and Hartmann go out, R. Noise outside, R. Carroll walks up and down, annoyed*]

JACK. [*Outside*] But I say you shall.

KRAFT. [*Outside*] Ha! Ve shall see dat! Ve shall see.

CARROLL. Hello! What's that? [*Kraft bursts into room, followed by Jack, R.*]

JACK. You shall neither have peace nor "peesnis," till you consent.

KRAFT. [*C., seeing Carroll*] Oh! My tear poy—you are here! Save me from dis tam prother-in-law of yours.

CARROLL. [*Down L.*] What's the matter?

KRAFT. He, too, is smashed—kone tead sbooney on Stella.

CARROLL. [*Laughing*] He—Jack? That boy gone on Stella? [*Sits L. of C. table*]

JACK. [*Comes C. Kraft, R.*] Boy! I'm a junior at Columbia, too—and stroke oar of my class, if I do look light. For years I've toiled at sculling and the classics, consoled only with the thought of liberty to come; liberty to live, love and lie, like all the rest of you chaps, and now you won't give me a chance.

CARROLL. Chance to what?

JACK. My dear old Carroll, I am young—you are old.

CARROLL. Thanks.

JACK. You have the cool cash of experience, but I—I have the fiery fervor of youth—have mercy! Give me a chance to pit my youth against your gold—in short, to cut you out with Stella. [*Leaning over table*]

CARROLL. [*Annoyed, looks off, L.*] Hush! Not so loud! [*Rises, goes up, C.*]

JACK. [*Sits on table*] I'll bet all my old college books I'll beat you.

CARROLL. [*C.*] What are you talking about? [*During all this, Kraft is looking at photographs on table, R.*]

JACK. An introduction to Stella! Here's old Kraft, her manager, refuses to introduce me. You own this rascal, and can command him to take me behind the scenes.

CARROLL. [C.] Behind the scenes! You! What would my wife, your sister, say to that?

JACK. [L.] What would she say if she knew how much time *you* spent there?

CARROLL. [C.] Silence! You fool. You're a mere infant—I am a man of the world. I know how to take care of myself, but you—you would be swept away into a whirlpool of dissipation. [*Goes up*]

JACK. Ye gods! That's what I want! Swept away! To know the blissful rapture of a mad infatuation.

KRAFT. [R., *putting hands to ears*] Ach! Dere he koes again.

JACK. I have seen her from afar. Oh, for the touch of a vanished hand, and the joy of a night that's to come!

CARROLL. [*Up to fire, back to audience*] Stop your nonsense!

JACK. Never! Till Stella bids me despair—Stella, goddess of comedy, sorceress of my heart, divine dream of damning grace.

CARROLL. [*Turning*] He's crazy! What can we do with such a gushing fool?

KRAFT. Present him to Stella. She will cure him.

JACK. Aye! Cure or kill me! Either would be Heaven from her hand.

KRAFT. Ha, ha! Eef you knew her—eef you only knew her.

JACK. [*Imitating him*] That's it: "*Eef* I only knew her!" That's what I want, exactly.

KRAFT. She would take de nonsense oud off you, mighty kuevick.

JACK. How?

KRAFT. [*Coming C., L.*] You would soon find dat she care nodings for your fine kush, unless it prings her cash. All her love notes she trow away, because dey cannot be discounted at de pank. Ha, ha! Vat you tink she call me?

JACK. Tell me quickly! Any word from her lips will be sweet to me.

KRAFT. She kall me her placksmid's apron.

JACK. Blacksmith's apron! Why?

KRAFT. Because I keep de spharks away.

CARROLL. [*Comes down, R., laughing*] Ha, ha, ha!

JACK. You're a bad apron, then [*Pointing at Carroll*], for here's a spark that you permit to reach her every night.

KRAFT. [C.] Ha! Yes, but he's a spark dat does not purn—he only pays—and pays well, too! Ha! Ha! Ha!

JACK. Come! I say, present me—and I'll pay!

KRAFT. You pay? No, no! You are too poor! Ven you are a pank president, perhaps. Dat's de kint of feesh—ha, ha! You see? Pank president—feesh—ha, ha! Good choke! Ha, ha!

JACK. But what right have you to keep me away from her, anyway?

KRAFT. Vat wight? Mein Gott! I mate her.

JACK. What! You taught Stella to sing, with that voice?

KRAFT. Bah! I tid not deach her—I did more dan that. I managed her.

JACK. Managed her?

KRAFT. Yes! Listen—I fount dis tivine kreature in a poor Café Chantant in France, cutting kabers in coddon dights, half tressed and half starfed—but a genius. I pought her for fife years; it was a luggy thing for her and for me; till den she worked twice so hart and sing twice so well as now, and made nodings, but I took her and forced all de vorld to her feed. I plowed her trumpets in de streets, at de hotels—on de newspabers. I advertised in ten colors fifty feet long—de reporters lied for me apoud offers of marriage from princes—apoud how she refused even to receive emperors midoud dere vifes—apoud the duels of tukes for her—apoud de nose pulls of big swells in de public parks, and den effery tam fool in de town was retty to be a asses for her sweet sake.

JACK. Yes, and the public drown her in flowers. [*Rises, goes down, L. Carroll sits on sofa*]

KRAFT. Vat! You tink all dose pouquets she gets are from de public?

JACK. Of course.

KRAFT. Ha, ha! Dose pouquets vas like de rain dat falls in the rivers dat is draw up again in de clouds by de sun and falls back again. I am de sun to my star.

JACK. You a sun?

KRAFT. Yes! My agents in de poxes trow the pouquets, my agents on the stage kather dem up, carry dem to de poxes—dey vas trow again, and kathered again and trow again, till de public tink a tousand pouquets vas trow at Stella, and den dey clab and cheer, and she is famous; but it is not her dancing pud my management dat makes her great.

JACK. Kraft, you are a genius, and well named.

KRAFT. Oh! Say nodings yet—come to de opera dis evening. I am koing to do a most vonderful piece of vork.

JACK. Let us go at once.

KRAFT. Von moment. A word first mid your good prother-in-law. [*Crosses to Carroll, aside to him*] Shall we see you tonight? [*Jack goes up to glass, posing*]

CARROLL. Without fail.

KRAFT. And de pracelet for Stella?

CARROLL. She shall have the bracelet, or a check for five thousand dollars.

KRAFT. Bravo! De check vill win more dan de pracelet—dare's nodings like a check to go to a woman's heart.

CARROLL. [*Glancing at newspaper*] Hum! Yes, so I suppose.

KRAFT. Courage! My poor Stella shall yet be yours. [*Music*]

ALICE. [*Outside, L.*] Oh! Bessie, go back for my sketches—you'll find them on my dressing stand.

CARROLL. Hush! My wife is coming.

KRAFT. [*Behind sofa*] Den I vill run. [*To Jack*] Master Jack, I vill be good. Come mit me—for his sake. [*Pointing at Carroll*] You shall meet la Stella.

JACK. [*Grasping his hand*] Kraft, you're an angel! [*Shakes hand and going, R.*]

KRAFT. [*As they go, laughing*] Yes, a hangel of tarkness, my poy—tarkness—ha, ha, ha! [*Exit arm in arm with Jack*]

ALICE. [*Outside*] Carroll! [*Music. Fire burning, C. Lounge on which are robes and sofa pillow, R. Table, L. and chairs. Cabinet piano, down L. Carroll seated upon lounge and glancing at paper, as Alice calls without*] Carroll! [*He does not rise. She enters, L., carrying cloak and putting on gloves. Music stops*] Car— Well! Why don't you answer me when I call? [*He turns smiling, but not rising*] Five kisses. [*Kissing him rapidly*] One—two—three—four—five, because I'm going out. [*Crosses, L., puts cloak on chair*]

CARROLL. What a vision of loveliness you are!

ALICE. What did you say?

CARROLL. I was merely expressing my admiration, Mrs. Clandenning.

ALICE. [*Standing*] Am I beautiful?

CARROLL. More than beautiful! Charming!

ALICE. [*Throwing herself on floor at his feet and putting her face up*] Can you see any powder?

CARROLL. [*Examining attentively*] Not a particle! [*Kisses her*] Whom are you going to dazzle tonight?

ALICE. I am not going out to dazzle, Mr. Clandenning; I am going out on business.

CARROLL. [*Looking at paper*] Business!

ALICE. Yes—our rehearsal at Mrs. Harrington's.

CARROLL. [*Still engrossed in paper*] Rehearsal!

ALICE. Yes, for— Carroll, please don't read the paper. [*Putting her hands on it*] I think you might listen to me. [*He throws the paper aside, laughingly*]

CARROLL. I beg pardon! Go on.

ALICE. Why! You know we are getting up a charade, and if possible, we want to give it on Friday night. It's for the benefit of—a—of a— [*Little pause, Carroll laughs*] You needn't laugh, because I know, it's for something—"old men." Industrious—indigent old men.

CARROLL. Ah, well! As your devotion is bestowed only upon old men, I suppose I cannot complain.

ALICE. I have a great part.

CARROLL. Yes?

ALICE. Magnificent! Magnificent! Three changes of dress.

CARROLL. So that is your idea of a great part, is it? [*She nods*] Hum! You'll make a leading lady, yet.

ALICE. Yes! She doesn't say very much, but the dresses are simply delicious. In perfect taste.

CARROLL. Do you mean to eat them?

ALICE. Now, Carroll, I won't talk to you if you don't stop teasing. [*Counts on fingers*] The first dress is a soubrette's, the second an oriental slave, and the last a divine antique. It's just perfectly lovely!

CARROLL. An antique! [*Enter Bessie with photographs, from up L.*]

BESS. Here they are, madame.

ALICE. What? Oh! The photographs. [*Bessie gives them to her, then exit, L.*] I want you to look at these—this is the soubrette's. [*Little pause. She is seated at his feet, he is on lounge, bends far over in examining the photos she hands him*] What do you think of it?

CARROLL. Lovely ankles!

ALICE. Bother the ankles! Look at the dress.

CARROLL. Exceedingly piquant.

ALICE. Here's the slave.

CARROLL. Hum! Good deal of the slave! Isn't the—a—drapery a little scarce? [*Little pause. Suddenly Alice draws her feet up under her*]

ALICE. If you are going to make any more criticisms of that description, sir, I will not show you the antique.

CARROLL. [*Laughs*] I won't. Let's see it. [*She hesitates, making a little moue before handing it*] Good heavens! [*Pause*] Is this an antique?

ALICE. Certainly! [*Tries to look dignified*]

CARROLL. Well! It's the freshest-looking damsel for an antique I ever saw! Where's her dress? [*Alice laughs against her will*]

ALICE. There! What's the matter with—where are—? Haven't you got any eyes?

CARROLL. Yes, but it's other people's eyes I object to in your case. [*She gets up on lounge beside him, her feet under her*]

ALICE. Carroll, are you jealous?

CARROLL. Of everything concerning you.

ALICE. Bravo! [*Suddenly changing*] I love to have you jealous—I'm jealous, too. [*He rises, standing with back to wall, hands in pocket, looking down upon her as she sits on lounge, her face raised to his*]

CARROLL. Of what?

ALICE. You're away from me so much. Carroll, you don't know how much I love you.

CARROLL. I do know, little woman. I measure your love by my own.

ALICE. Do you love me?

CARROLL. More than my life.

ALICE. Then give me a little of your life.

CARROLL. What do you mean?

ALICE. Please don't go out every night.

CARROLL. Why! Bless your dear heart! I am always here in spirit, and never go out, except on business.

ALICE. [*Crosses to chair near L.C.*] Bother business! [*Leans over chair*]

CARROLL. Unfortunately, it's business that bothers us. [*Strolling to C.*] But you have everything the world can give. What do you want more?

ALICE. [*Gently*] A little more of your time, dear. [*Pause*] Just a little more of your time.

CARROLL. Silly child! You know you have every hour of my life. Even when I am away, I am laboring for love of you.

ALICE. Honestly?

CARROLL. Do you doubt me?

ALICE. No! I should die if I doubted you, Carroll. [*Crosses to lounge and throws herself on it. Carroll takes hat from table, L. and goes to her*]

CARROLL. [*Leaning over her at back of lounge*] Then long life and happiness to you, my darling! [*Kisses her. She clings to his neck. He laughingly endeavors to disengage himself*] There, dear! I must go. The directors of the bank meet tonight for important business.

ALICE. Business! Business! Business! Will you never be rich enough?

CARROLL. Never! Until I can lay the wealth of Cræsus at your feet. There, there, dear! Good-by—go to your triumphs and break all their hearts. [*Kisses her and exit. She curls up on lounge*]

ALICE. Dear old fellow! If he only knew how little I cared for this luxury, and how much I cared for his love! [*Enter Jack, R., opera hat and coat on arm*]

JACK. Hurrah! Hurrah! Carroll, old man! I shall see her! Tonight! [*Seeing Alice*] Oh, Lord! My sister!

ALICE. Jack! For pity's sake, what's all this noise about?

JACK. [C.] About Stella! No, that is—Where's Carroll?

ALICE. He's gone.

JACK. What! Already! He was to go with me.

ALICE. To go with you! Where?

JACK. To the opera. Stella performs a special act tonight, in honor of the occasion.

ALICE. What occasion?

JACK. This is the anniversary of Stella's début in America.

ALICE. Who's Stella?

JACK. [*Rapturously*] Stella! Who is Stella? The most bewitching nymph that ever toed the stage. The queen of the comic art. The most bewildering, ravishing, irresistible beauty that ever set men mad. [*Gradually during this speech, Alice has raised herself to a sitting posture on lounge, and she now examines him attentively*]

ALICE. [*With mock solemnity*] My child! I fear that the city air has been too much for you. I think I shall have to send you home. [*Suddenly bursting into a laugh, and throwing herself back on lounge*] In love! In love with an actress!

JACK. I am in love with her. So is every other man in the city.

ALICE. [*Sobering and sitting again*] Excuse me, but did you say Carroll was going to hear her sing tonight?

JACK. [*Comes C.*] Precisely.

ALICE. [*Rising airily*] Well, you needn't wait. He's forgotten all about her. He's gone somewhere else. [*Goes L., begins putting on coat*]

JACK. The deuce he has! Where?

ALICE. Why, the—the—to the meeting of the directors of his bank.

JACK. Oh! [*Laughs*]

ALICE. What are you laughing at?

JACK. [*Checks himself*] I laughing? Was I laughing? I beg pardon—I—that is—why, of course, I laughed to think what a fool he was to prefer the bank to the opera. But business is business, you know, and pleasure is the best business in the world, for me, so good-by, little sister. [*Alice sits, L., at piano*] When Carroll gets back from the bank, give him my love, and say I think he is a real good little boy. [*Exit laughing, R.*]

ALICE. What's he laughing at? [*Plays prelude and commences to sing a little French song. Stops suddenly*] Stella! "The most bewildering, ravishing, irresistible beauty that ever set men mad." Umph! [*Tosses head and resumes song, touching instrument harder. Stops again*] I wonder if Carroll has seen her? [*Resumes song, giving piano a bang. Stopping again*] The idea of that

crazy brother of mine imagining for one instant that I could be jealous of an opera dancer! [*Gives piano a furious bang, and finishes song, at conclusion of which, enter Bessie, R.*]

BESS. Madame! Madame! Mr. Hartmann has returned.

ALICE. [*Playing*] Hartmann! Who's he?

BESS. A jeweler. He wants to know where the master is. He must see him at once.

ALICE. He'll find him at the bank.

BESS. Oh! But, madame! Don't let him go until you've seen it.

ALICE. Seen what?

BESS. The present!

ALICE. [*Wheeling around on stool*] Eh!

BESS. The present!

ALICE. The pre— What are you talking about?

BESS. You know, madame, this is your birthday.

ALICE. So it is!—I'd forgotten all about it.

BESS. But the master hasn't—he's planned a magnificent surprise for you.

ALICE. [*Rises*] Surprise!

BESS. Yes, I heard him talking with Mr. Hartmann about it not an hour ago. A present he intends to give you tonight. He was awfully mad that it was not done.

ALICE. Bessie, Mr. Clandenning intended it as a surprise, and you have done very wrong to tell me anything about it.

BESS. Mr. Hartmann has returned with a box under his arm. I'm sure it's the present.

ALICE. Oh! Tell him to come up here at once.

BESS. I will, madame. [*Going*] Now for some fun! [*Exit*]

ALICE. [*Sits L. of L.C. table*] That dear, darling boy! A surprise! That shows how he thinks of me! And here, a moment ago, when Jack was praising that Stella, I dared to doubt my husband for an instant. Oh! [*Hides face on arms, on table, child-fashion. Enter Bessie with Hartmann, who carries package under his arm*]

BESS. Here is madame. [*Alice assumes a dignified position*]

HART. [*Starting*] Pardon me, madame. I thought I was to see—

ALICE. My husband?

HART. Yes, madame.

ALICE. Won't I do as well? [*Bessie and Alice both turn heads to conceal smile*]

HART. Well, you see—that is—

ALICE. [*Very calmly, completely concealing impatience*] Oh! It's all right! I know all about the matter. I see you have brought it.

HART. Brought what, madame?

ALICE. It is in that package under your arm.

HART. [*Embarrassed*] This package—I assure you, madame—

ALICE. Come, come! No more mysteries. This is my birthday, Mr. Hartmann.

HART. Your birthday, madame? Oh! I begin to understand.

ALICE. [*Losing control of her patience, and becoming a child again*] Please hurry, Mr. Hartmann! I'm just dying to see it.

HART. Oh! It is for you.

ALICE. Of course! For whom else could it be?

HART. Well, you see, madame, in these cases one never knows, and then it is my business to be discreet, that is, it is safer.

ALICE. What do you mean?

HART. Well, when a customer desires to surprise, and the lady insists on seeing it beforehand—

ALICE. Why, she simply acts surprised when the right time comes. Don't be afraid—I can act superbly if necessary.

HART. Oh! Well, on that understanding, madame. [*He is C., near table, L.C. Alice, L. of table, leaning over it interestedly, Bessie on his R. Lowering his voice*] It is a bracelet, madame. [*Begins to undo package*] The finest ever made in my shop. [*Bessie draws near. Hartmann stops*] Shall this young woman see, too?

ALICE. Certainly not! He meant it for my eyes alone. You must go, Bessie.

BESS. Oh! Madame, please!

ALICE. No, no, no! You must go.

BESS. She wouldn't have seen it herself, if it hadn't been for me! [*Bounces out, R.*]

ALICE. Hurry! Hurry! Oh! Will you never get those papers off?

HART. It is all emeralds and diamonds. [*Holding it up*] See!

ALICE. Oh! It's lovely! [*Takes it from him, crosses and stands under chandelier*] What exquisite stones, and what a beautiful design! [*Goes to lounge and sits*]

HART. [*Following and standing on her L.*] Yes, your husband's own design, madame. The star—the Latin inscription, the letter, all!

ALICE. The letter! [*Music*]

HART. [*Pointing it out*] Yes! See! The first letter of your Christian name, madame.

ALICE. The letter "S."

HART. [*Crossing to L.*] Yes, and a very original "S."

ALICE. But my name does not commence with "S."

HART. What! Eh! You have no name that begins with an "S"?

ALICE. [*C.*] I have only one name. Alice.

HART. [*Sinks into chair, L. of table*] Good heavens!

ALICE. [*Dazed*] You were designed by Carroll, and bought for a woman, and that woman is—

HART. [*Rises, but remains by chair*] Believe me, madame, if I had had the least idea—

ALICE. [*Laying it on table*] It's for another! Days and nights away from me! Oh! Is it possible! Is it possible! [*Turns back to audience. Music ceases*]

HART. [*Still by chair*] Madame, be calm! There may be some mistake.

ALICE. [*Turning*] Mistake! [*Another change of manner, hand on table*] What's this thing worth?

HART. Five thousand dollars.

ALICE. And he designed it?

HART. I—that is—

ALICE. Don't lie to me! You know he did. How long ago?

HART. More than a month.

ALICE. Ha, ha, ha! A bracelet, worth five thousand dollars, designed a month ago. Ha, ha, ha! A charming present! [*Throws herself on lounge*]

HART. [*Crosses to her*] Oh, madame! I beg—I cannot bear it.

ALICE. [*Rising and crossing to L., Hartmann following*] And while I sit at home here like a little fool, loving him, he gives his time, thought, and his heart to somebody else! [*She goes up behind table to C., and sinks in a chair, up C., back to the audience. Hartmann remains L.*]

HART. It's a shame! A cruel shame!

ALICE. [*Rises suddenly, comes down to table*] Who is she? Tell me who she is?

HART. I swear to you, madame, I do not know.

ALICE. [*Fiercely*] I will know who she is! [*Tremulously*] I suppose everybody knows but me! [*Sits R. of table, taking up bracelet*] "S"! Her name begins with "S."

HART. [*Leaning over the table*] Excuse me, madame. Have you no dear friend whose name begins with "S"?

ALICE. Why? [*Chair is turned toward table*]

HART. Because! She is sure to be the one.

ALICE. Sophie—Sarah—Sidonia—No, no, no! They are all too ugly. [*Presses hand over forehead, again looks at bracelet*] This star! This star!

HART. The—the star?

ALICE. Yes! The star! The star! I suppose the star means something, doesn't it, Mr. Hartmann?

HART. Yes, I remember. He said it was an allusion in Latin to her name.

ALICE. Ah!

HART. Do you know Latin, madame?

ALICE. No.

HART. No more do I.

ALICE. I know— [*Starting up*] The dictionary! [*Gets it from case, up R., places it on, and stands behind table, turning leaves feverishly*] M—N—O—P—Q—R—S, here it is. [*Running finger up and down columns*] Star! French, Étoile; Latin, Stella— [*Shuts book with a bang*] Stella! That's where he goes every night. Betrayed for an actress! [*Sinks in chair, up C., back to audience, head in hands*]

HART. No, no, madame! Impossible! I know la Stella. They may say what they like of her, but she is good. She would never steal a man away from his wife.

ALICE. [*Rises*] I will wait. When he comes, I will show him that— [*Points to bracelet*] and he shall tell me the truth.

HART. Show that to your husband! I am a dead man. No, no! He is the last person in the world to question. He will never confess.

ALICE. [*Suddenly realizing*] You are right, sir! He will never confess. [*A thought strikes her*] But she shall betray him to me. [*At table. Music, till curtain*]

HART. You would go to her?

ALICE. She performs at the opera tonight. Do you know her?

HART. Yes—my niece is her dressmaker.

ALICE. Good! [*Rings bell on table*] You shall pass me off as an assistant to your niece. Where did I put—what did I do with my gloves? [*Unbuttoning cloak*]

HART. Good Lord! What's coming? [*Enter Bessie*]

ALICE. Go downstairs and get that soubrette's dress intended for the charade. Don't stand like that, go!

BESS. Yes, madame! [*Exit*]

HART. What! Madame—you would encounter Stella behind the scenes, in her dressing-room?

ALICE. I would go to the lowest den on earth to save the man I love.

HART. And you shall save him, madame. I will go with you.

ALICE. [*Grasps his hand*] Ah! God bless you! [*Turns upstage. Enter Bessie, dress on arm*]

BESS. Madame, the carriage for the rehearsal!

ALICE. Rehearsal! No, I shall not rehearse tonight, I shall act! [*Exit, L.*]

CURTAIN

ACT II.

SCENE: *Stella's dressing-room at the opera. Lights up, bright carpet, practicable doors R. and L. 2 E. Screen, up C., hiding dressing place. Lounge, L.C. Long mirror, L. Pair dancing slippers on floor near mirror. Small table, up C.L., on which are bouquets and notes. Table, down R., on which is workbasket, water and small mirror. Chair near table, long cloak on chair. Louise discovered arranging bouquets on table, L.C. Loud applause and cries of "Bravo!" heard in the distance, off R. Music at rise, kept up pianissimo till Kraft says "go to de devil!"*

LOUISE. [*Up L., at little table*] Ah! There they go again, clapping and cheering like a parcel of lunatics. What a lucky woman la Stella is, to be sure. She makes more by fooling in five minutes, than many of the wisest men in five years.

CALL-BOY. [*Running in with bouquets from R. 2.*] Here ye are agin, Louise! Four big ones!

LOUISE. [*Taking bouquets and looking at cards*] Sir Henry Busted, of the British Embassy; General Peteroffsky, Prof. Levi Abrams, Karamou Pasha. Ha, ha, ha! Christian, pagan, and Jew, all at her feet. [*Putting bouquets on table, up L.*]

BOY. And every darned one of 'em fooled. [*R.*]

LOUISE. [*Folding up and arranging things, L.*] Aye! She flirts with all and cares for none.

BOY. Gosh! Ain't she a downy cove—she makes each fellar fight t'other to get ahead, while she rakes in the boodle from 'em all. [*Both laugh. Crash, cry and laughter heard outside, off L. 2. and E.*]

LOUISE. Lord! What's that?

JACK. [*Outside*] Damn those steps!

KRAFT. [*Outside*] Ha, ha, ha! De vay of de transgressor is hart, my poy.

BOY. Golly! Here's the guvnor! I'm off. [*Exit hurriedly, R.*]

LOUISE. [*Taking long cloak and running off, R.*] Me, too!

KRAFT. [*Entering from L.*] Ha! Here we are in de queen's poudoir!

JACK. [*Limping in*] Hang my luck! I've broken my leg— [*Suddenly seeing split in knee of pants*] Good Lord! Look at that!

KRAFT. [*C. Laughing and showing him split in elbow of his coat sleeve*] And that—

JACK. [*Woefully. Looks in mirror, L.*] Ye gods! Rags—actually in rags. She'll laugh at me.

KRAFT. Oh! Sure!

JACK. [*Fiercely*] Why didn't you tell me those steps were there?

KRAFT. Mein Gott! You have eyes. [*Going upstage, looking off, door R.*]

JACK. Yes, but they're no good in the dark.

KRAFT. Den go home. Any man who can't see in de tark, petter keep away from Stella! She vill preak more dan his pones—she'll preak his pank.

JACK. I won't go home—I'll see her, rags or no rags! I'll spoon her, blind or no blind!

KRAFT. All right—eef you vill pe a fool, vy den stay here and go to de tefle. [*During this, business of Jack with slipper, L., great applause, with cries of "Bravo!" outside*] Ah, ha! The act is over! They're calling her out. She'll soon be here! [*Music stops*]

JACK. And I shall meet her face to face, and hear her voice, and take her hand.

KRAFT. And show your rags. [*Coming C.*]

JACK. [*Bravely*] Yes, and show my rags—the precious rags I won in seeking her. [*Stella and others heard laughing outside, R.*]

KRAFT. [*C.*] She's here!

JACK. [*Triumphantly*] And so am I, by George! [*Enter Stella in long cloak, followed by Louise, from R. end. Louise goes up behind screen, is seen occasionally at work*]

KRAFT. [*Kissing her hand with great gallantry*] Vonce more, you triumph, princesse! [*Jack retires up a little, R.*]

STELLA. [*Drinking a little water at table, R.*] Bah! It ees not zare applause but zare money I care for. Ze receipts, baron, ze returns—vare are zey?

KRAFT. [*Presenting paper*] Behold, tear queen!

STELLA. Eh! How's zis? Only tree t'ousand nine hundred an' sixty! [*Indignantly*] Ze house vas packed, baron! Zey sheat us at ze door.

KRAFT. No, no. Zare vas many teadhets here tonight. I kot de whole press here tonight, at de lasd moment.

STELLA. The press here tonight! Vy for, mon cher?

KRAFT. I send all of dem dis announcemend—[*Takes bill from pocket and holds it up before her*]

STELLA. [*Reads bill in broken English, as follows*] "Special Notice! In consequence of a cablegram just received from the Emperor of Russia, com-

manding the immediate return of Mme. Stella to St. Petersburg"—[*Speaking angrily*] Vat zat mean?

KRAFT. Reat on, my tear.

STELLA. [*Reading*] "The management regrets to announce this as the last night of the great danseuse in America."

JACK. [*Aside, in dismay*] She is going away!

STELLA. [*To Kraft*] Vas you crazy?

KRAFT. Reat de rest, sveet highness.

STELLA. [*Reading*] "On account of her sudden departure, a farewell supper is to be given Mme. Stella, immediately after the performance, by the press of this city. The number of guests is limited to three hundred; seats will be sold at auction at the close of the opera." [*Crosses to C.*] Ah, ha!

KRAFT. Dis notice has been sent to all de hotels, and hangs all over de lippy of de house. Ve shall sell tree huntret seats for twenty dollars each; dat gifs us six t'ousant tollars for de house.

STELLA. Bravo! Bravo! You are ze king of directors, mon cher. You may kees my cheek.

KRAFT. [*Bowing low*] I abbreciate de honor, princesse. [*Kisses her cheek*]

JACK. [*Exploding. Comes down, L.*] Ye gods! Is she really going away?

STELLA. [*Turning, amazed*] And who is zis?

KRAFT. Ah! Permit me to present von off your most tefoted admirers—Mr. John Harrington.

JACK. Mademoiselle, this is the most glorious moment of my life! [*Stella looks at him a moment, then bursts into a merry laugh*] That's right, mademoiselle—laugh. I'd rather hear you laugh than Patti sing. I bless the rags that bring the luck of such a laugh from you.

STELLA. Pardon, monsieur, but—

JACK. Oh! No apologies. I tore my clothes in haste to get to you. For the precious privilege of this sweet hour, I would have willingly been stripped of every stitch of clothes I have.

STELLA. Oh! Monsieur, vat you say?

JACK. I don't know and I don't care! I have the reckless courage of despair, for I know I could say nothing that would win a thought from you; but if I talked a million words a minute, for a million years, I could never tell the pride, the joy—the glory of this night to me.

STELLA. [*Laughing*] Vraiment! You are an original! [*Crosses to L.*]

JACK. [*C.*] I'd be an original sin itself, to win a smile from you.

KRAFT. [*R.*] Mein Gott! Dis spark is mooch too full of fire.

STELLA. [*Sitting on lounge*] You flatter, monsieur.

JACK. No—I can lie, but I won't to you, cruel as you are.

STELLA. Cruel, monsieur?

JACK. Yes, cruel! You laugh at every heart you break—but no matter! Grace and beauty have a divine right to be cruel.

STELLA. [*Rises, throwing off her cloak, and appearing in bouffe dress*] You are dangerous, monsieur, and I must send you away.

KRAFT. Yes, at vonce! Mademoiselle must tress for de next act.

JACK. [*Seizing Stella's hand*] But we shall meet again?

STELLA. I hope so, indeed.

JACK. You hope—then I shall—? [*Stella goes up, C., chats with Louise*]

KRAFT. Yes, you shall meet her again, at supper. Go and puy your seat.

JACK. [*L.C.*] I will. Lend me the money.

KRAFT. [*Laughing, R.C.*] Yes, I vill—on one condition.

JACK. Name it.

KRAFT. Dat you vill bid 'em up high.

JACK. I swear it.

KRAFT. [*Handing money*] Dere! Now ko!

JACK. [*At door*] Mademoiselle, believe me desperately yours. [*Bowing*] Heart, head and rags. [*Runs off, L.*]

STELLA. [*Laughing*] What a charming young fool! Is he rich? [*Coming down, L.C.*]

KRAFT. In nosing put kush.

STELLA. Vat a pity! I like him. Do ve really go tomorrow?

KRAFT. Ve sail by de *Alaska*, at fife tomorrow morning.

STELLA. Mon Dieu! Are you mad?

KRAFT. [*Taking hat from table, R.*] No, my tear, I am only clever, as you shall see. But I must go and look after our supper. Farewell, little kurl. [*Crosses to L.*]

STELLA. But Monsieur Carroll—is he coming? [*Crossing to R.*]

KRAFT. Oh! Indeed, yes.

STELLA. [*Begins to remove ornaments on hair, and puts them on table, R.*] Viz ze bracelet?

KRAFT. Or a check for five t'ousand tollars. [*Arranging cravat at mirror, L.*]

STELLA. Ah! Goot! I vas sure he vas a tonkey.

KRAFT. Luckily for you.

STELLA. And for you.

KRAFT. Auxactly! So—[*Kissing her frankly*] good-by for a vile. [*Exit, L.*]

STELLA. Au revoir. Louise, ees my petticoat come?

LOUISE. [*Comes from behind screen, skirts in hand*] Not yet, mademoiselle. [*Returns behind screen*]

STELLA. Ah! Zat ees bad—vicked—I sall gif zat Hartmann voman no more vork.

BOY. [*At door, R., calling*] Second act!

STELLA. Grand dieu! I must hurry and dress. [*Goes behind screen. Knock at door, L.*] Who ees zare?

HART. It is I—Hartmann.

STELLA. Ah! At last! Let him in, Louise.

LOUISE. Yes, mademoiselle. [*Opens door, L. Enter Hartmann with box, followed by Alice, L.*]

STELLA. Have you pring me zat petticoat? [*Behind screen*]

HART. [*L.C., Alice L.*] Yes, mademoiselle. I came with my niece's assistant, to show her the way. She has it here.

STELLA. [*Louise, C.*] Oh! You have ze assistant viz you!

HART. Yes, mademoiselle.

STELLA. Goot! Zend me ze petticoat, and let ze assistant wait. She sall do me some mending. [*Louise takes box and goes behind screen*]

ALICE. [*Pointing at screen, to Hartmann*] Is she there?

HART. Yes, madame. That is her voice. [*Alice grows faint, sits on lounge*] My child, control yourself.

STELLA. [*Throwing out stocking*] Tell zat girl to mend zis stocking for me. She vill find needle and tread on de table. [*Hartmann picks up stocking, hands it to Alice, who rises. Business*]

HART. If you wish to stay, madame. [*Alice continues business*] You are right—let us go.

ALICE. What was the use of my coming here, if I go now?

HART. If you stay, madame, you must play your part bravely.

ALICE. Yes, I will try, Mr. Hartmann—[*Sits on lounge. Pause*] Perhaps he will not come—perhaps it is all a mistake?

HART. Yes, I hope—I believe it is.

ALICE. Oh! If I were only sure!

STELLA. Hartmann, are you zare?

HART. Yes, mademoiselle.

STELLA. Have you nothing else for me—no present? No bracelet?

HART. No, mademoiselle.

STELLA. Ah! Zat is strange! He promised it sure tonight. [*Alice sinks on lounge and hides her face*] I am coming out, Hartmann, and as I am in déshabillé, you must go, my friend.

HART. [*Crosses to L.*] Very well, mademoiselle.

ALICE. [*Starting up*] Please don't go.

HART. I must, madame. Be wise—go with me.

ALICE. No! I told you, NO!

STELLA. Have you gone, Hartmann?

HART. [*Crosses to L.*] I am going, mademoiselle.

STELLA. Hurry! Eef you see Monsieur Carroll, send him here. [*Alice starts and draws herself up firmly. Hartmann goes to door, puts his hand out as though to beg her to go*]

ALICE. [*Fiercely*] No! Go! Go! I am as strong as a tigress now. [*Hartmann makes gesture of despair, and exit, L.*]

STELLA. [*Coming from behind screen in her ballet skirts, pinning up her hair*] Bring me zat new petticoat, Louise, and some pins.

LOUISE. [*Behind screen*] Yes, mam'selle.

STELLA. [*Goes down to table, R., and then turns, starting at sight of Alice*] Oh! So you are ze assistant—vraiment! You are quite distinguée—and par-bleu!—I bet you are proud. [*Little pause. She sits at table arranging hair, not looking at Alice*]

ALICE. [*Aside*] She is so pretty! [*Advancing to C., stands with hand on chair, C.*]

STELLA. Vat ees your name, mademoiselle?

ALICE. My name, madame? [*Louise brings pins, then goes behind screen*]

STELLA. I am not madame, I am mademoiselle.

ALICE. I beg pardon.

STELLA. But your name! What is it?

ALICE. It is—I mean—

STELLA. Vell! Vell!

ALICE. Anna, mademoiselle.

STELLA. A pretty name, and you have a pretty face. I am sorry for you.

ALICE. Sorry for me!

STELLA. Yes. It is a great misfortune to be young, beautiful and poor. You must not come here behind the scenes; it is dangerous.

ALICE. Dangerous!

STELLA. Yes. Your beauty will be your ruin here.

ALICE. [*Proudly*] You don't know me, mademoiselle.

STELLA. Oh! I know you are proud. So much the worse ven ze ruin come—it only hurt ze more.

ALICE. You are beautiful, mademoiselle, and surely you have escaped?

STELLA. Oh, yes! You bet! Dare is no danger here to me. I vas born on de stage. My mozzet taught me to know ze men before I vas so high. [*Descriptive gesture, laughing*] I despise zem—zey cannot hurt me; but, oh, I love to deceive zem—to make zem von great big fools!

ALICE. Didn't you ever love anybody?

STELLA. [*Laughing*] Love! Oh, no! I nefer haf, and I nefer vill. Oh, no! Not much, you bet!

ALICE. [*Aside*] Thank Heaven!

STELLA. Oh! I say, Anna, bring me zose slippers. [*Pointing to slippers near mirror, L. Alice hesitates, then brings slippers*] Now put zem on my foots. [*Holds up feet, Alice hesitates*] What ze matter viz you? You vant me hold my legs up all night? [*Alice hesitates, then puts on slippers*] Oh! My great big gracious—but you are proud—very, very proud for a tressmaker! [*Louise brings in petticoat, stands C.*] My poor, poor shild! I pity you; you mus' get over zat pride. Here, help me wiz zis petticoat. [*Rises, places it in her hands*]

ALICE. What shall I do, mademoiselle? [*Alice puts it over her head. Knock comes on door, R.*]

STELLA. [*With head in petticoat*] Who's zare?

CARROLL. [*Outside*] It is I—Carroll. [*Alice starts and stops, stunned*]

STELLA. [*Head still in petticoat*] Vat you vant?

CARROLL. Let me in.

STELLA. Oh! Mon! [*To Alice*] Vat ze mazzer vis you, you fool!

CARROLL. What's that?

STELLA. Oh! Not you—I talk to my maid.

ALICE. [*Dropping petticoat*] Her maid! [*Sinks on lounge*]

STELLA. Ah! Mon Dieu! You are good for nothing!

CARROLL. Good for nothing!

STELLA. Oh! Go vay! You bozzer me. I don't talk to you.

CARROLL. [*Knocking*] Have pity—let me in.

STELLA. Presently. Here, Louise, help me. Zis girl is no good! [*Louise comes down, R., and fixes skirt*]

CARROLL. Only one word.

STELLA. All right, go ahead. I can hear you through ze keyhole.

CARROLL. No, no! I must have it with you alone.

STELLA. Zen you must vait.

CARROLL. Is it true you leave in the morning? [*Louise is dressing her*]

STELLA. Yes.

CARROLL. What will become of me?

STELLA. You will stay here and be a good little boy.

CARROLL. I shall die if you leave me.

STELLA. Die! Vat color?

CARROLL. Oh! Don't be cruel, Stella. Let me in, I insist.

STELLA. By what right?

CARROLL. Forgive me, I implore. One word.

STELLA. Ah! Zat is besser—cool your heels in ze hall—I vill let you in by'm by.

CARROLL. Oh! You are cruel! Ungrateful!

STELLA. You have ze bracelet?

CARROLL. Something better.

STELLA. Zen I vill let you in.

CARROLL. Bravo!

STELLA. In ten minutes.

CARROLL. Oh! Damn it!

STELLA. Sir—

CARROLL. [*Humbly*] Forgive me, I submit. I will wait. [*Alice nearly falls from lounge*]

STELLA. Ah! Mon dieu! Ze tressmaker! [*Catching Alice, kneeling beside lounge*] Quick, Louise, some water! [*Lets Alice gently down upon lounge, gives her water. She slowly revives. Stella coos over her tenderly*] Oh! My poor, poor shild! Are you besser?

ALICE. [*Sitting up*] Thanks—it is nothing—I don't know—

STELLA. [*Rubbing hands*] Oh! Your hands are cold—you are pale, trembling—tell me what is it you suffer—poor heart—confide in me, it vill help you.

ALICE. Confide in you? [*Looks at her. Music*]

STELLA. [*Rises and goes C.*] Yes. Vy do you look at me like zat? Ah! My shild—I cannot bear to see ze sorrow—let me help you.

LOUISE. [*R., aside to Stella*] Hush! Mademoiselle, don't you see what's the matter? [*Whispers in her ear*]

STELLA. [*Aside to Louise*] Ah! It is a man—poor zing! I vill cure her—she sall hate ze men like me. [*Aloud, to Alice*] Oh! Mon dieu! You are crying. Ah! I see—you have a lover.

ALICE. I'm married.

STELLA. Vat! Married at your age?

LOUISE. [*Aside*] The silly fool!

STELLA. You trow yourself away so soon?

ALICE. Soon! I have been married two years.

STELLA. And crying already?

LOUISE. I'll warrant he beats her.

STELLA. No, no! Impossible! She is innocent, beautiful, good. Ze vorst man could not beat her. No! I see—[*Motions Louise away, she goes behind screen*] He is false to you—ze villain! Is he not, dear? Yes, false to you for some bold, bad, huzzy girl zat is no good, isn't it? [*Kneels by her. Pause*]

ALICE. [*Looking at Stella*] No! She is more beautiful and good than I dreamed. [*Music stops*]

STELLA. [*Pause*] Poor little sing! [*Suddenly*] Kiss me! [*Pause. Alice kisses her*] No, she is not good—I will not believe—she is a nasty, bad, huzzy sing; I hates her alretty. If she vas here I would scratch her eyes, you*bet. She is not worth your little toe. Ah! Zese men, zese men! Zey leave ze pearls of virtue zey haf got for ze common clods of dirt zey have not. Ah! I hate zem, and you must hate zem too—you bet, it is ze only way to escape misery, ruin, shame.

ALICE. No, no! I couldn't hate him! [*Rises, goes C., stands back to audience*]

STELLA. [*Rises, remains L.*] I say you shall hate him! Keep him away! Be cold—he vill run after you. Sorrow, cry for him, your eyes swell, your nose get red, you lose your beauty—he run away.

ALICE. Ah! What can I do? What can I do?

STELLA. Do! I vill tell you. Vy do zey all run after me? Because I laugh in zare faces, and keeps zem at ze door. You heard zat man just now? [*Alice nods*] Vell, he is von of ze first shentlemen in zis city. Zey tell me he has a lofely vife—sweet, beautiful, shaste and pure—he leaf her and come to me—vy? Because I snap my finger in his face—treat him like a dog. Did you not see?

ALICE. [*Bitterly*] I did—I did.

STELLA. Vell, do ze same to your husband. Treat him like a dog—he vill behave like a dog, and come crawling and vining to your feet.

ALICE. Oh! What humiliation! What shame!

STELLA. Bah! It is ze only vay—despise 'em all. Zis man Carroll, who has a angel for a vife, he comes here dangling after a singer, and he sink I care for him. Ach! I care only to make a fool of him. [*Crosses, R.*]

ALICE. Then you are not lovers?

STELLA. Lovers! [*Laughing*] You make me laugh, I bet. Lovers! Nefer! Dat's vy he follows me—I snub him. So eef I say I go to Russia, follow me, leave vife, home, ze world, come wiz me—ze puppy!—he would come at once. [*Crosses to R.*]

ALICE. [*Haughtily*] I won't believe it.

STELLA. Oh! Very well, you shall see!

ALICE. If I thought—

STELLA. You would believe your husband, too, vas not vorse a tear? You would try your eyes and treat him as he teserved?

ALICE. Yes, I would.

STELLA. [*Rises*] Zen, by Heaven! I cure you.

ALICE. How?

STELLA. Louise! [*Louise comes from behind screen*] Quick! Find Monsieur Carroll and send him here.

LOUISE. [*Going*] Instantly, mademoiselle. [*Exit, R.*]

ALICE. What are you going to do?

STELLA. Hide you and let you hear; teach you not to care a cake for ze best man in ze vorld. Quick! He is coming—hide zare! [*Points at screen*] You sall see—this dog shall follow me to Russia—yes, zis very tomorrow. [*As Alice hides, knock at the door, R. Stella at mirror, down L.*] Come in!

CARROLL. [*Entering, R.*] At last! [*Advancing*] Ah! Stella.

STELLA. Stan' back—not too close, my tear—you vill spoil my skirts. [*Beginning to practise some dancing steps, she does this all through the scene, thereby increasing the comedy, and by stopping at certain times, accentuating her emotional points*]

CARROLL. [*Half following her*] Hang your skirts!

STELLA. [*Over to R.*] Oh! Zey are hung vare zey should be—about my vaist.

CARROLL. [*C.*] How I envy them!

STELLA. Come, come. You call my room paradise—are you not content to be here, zen?

CARROLL. Content! When they say you are going away? But it can't be true.

STELLA. Oh! It must be, since everybody says so—everybody nefer lies, you know.

CARROLL. Everybody says you are heartless.

STELLA. [*Sitting, R. Laughs*] Zat time everybody are right, sure.

CARROLL. I don't believe it. If Heaven made beauty like yours without heart, it would be guilty of crime.

STELLA. Oh! But Heaven did not make my beauty—it was earth, miserable earth and cosmetics. [*Laughing*] I vas born on ze stage. Heaven is respectable—it nefer comes behind ze scenes.

CARROLL. Hell would be Heaven to me if you were there.

STELLA. [*Very soberly, rises*] Monsieur Carroll, if you say anozzer such wicked speech like zat, I will turn you out of my room. I am nosing but a danseuse, and bad, of course, but zare are some sings zat are sacred, even to me. [*Crosses to L.*]

CARROLL. Forgive me! I did not mean to be wicked, but if you only knew what you are to my life, and now you are going—what will become of me?

STELLA. Oh! You vill stay behind, and flirt viz ze new star.

CARROLL. That shows how little you understand me. To others you are merely a star, to me you are the sun itself! When you are gone, life will be without light.

STELLA. [*Sits on lounge*] Ah! Mon dieu! How beautiful! How poetic!

CARROLL. [*Sits beside her*] Oh! Stella, do not mock me. Believe me.

STELLA. I cannot. Vare ze proofs? [*Up to L. table, smelling flowers*]

CARROLL. My devotion here every night. [*Rises, faces her, back to audience*]

STELLA. Bah! You are only one of many.

CARROLL. [*Crosses to R., then turns*] My passionate declarations.

STELLA. [*Taking up a quantity of dainty notes from the table and letting them fall like water from between her fingers*] Bah! Here is only one night's shower of ze same nonsense.

CARROLL. My bouquets—my jewels.

STELLA. My drawers are full of jewels from a t'ousand others. Silly boy—I have only to pick and choose. Vy should I choose you? [*Down to glass, L.*]

CARROLL. Because I alone adore you—would die for you. [*R.C.*]

STELLA. Die for me! Ridiculous! You would not even live for me. [*Watching his face in glass, apparently arranging hair*]

CARROLL. I would live any life anywhere, for your sake.

STELLA. Even in Russia?

CARROLL. Yes, in Patagonia! Or the Mountains of the Moon.

STELLA. Prove me zat.

CARROLL. How? [*Aside*] The deuce! This is getting serious.

STELLA. Ah, ha! You hesitate!

CARROLL. No, no! It is not hesitation, it is business. You see, this is so sudden—to leave home, friends, affairs, like this, would be ruin.

STELLA. [*Turning*] So much ze besser—zat would prove somesing. It is easy to say sweet words ven you have tongue and intelligence. It is easy to give presents, too, ven you are rich, but eef a man would prove his love, he must ruin himself. Oh, altogezzer! [*Crosses to R.*]

CARROLL. [*In dismay*] Ruin himself!

STELLA. *Tout à fait*—entirely. Zen perhaps, even I would believe him—even I might take pity.

CARROLL. [*Seizing her hand*] And if I go with you tomorrow, you will believe me—you will return my love?

STELLA. Well, try; perhaps you will succeed.

CARROLL. I will—I will fly with you tomorrow. [*Cry heard behind the screen*] What's that?

STELLA. Vat is vat?

CARROLL. I heard a cry. [*Goes up, C.*]

BOY. [*At door, R.*] Second act, Satanella!

STELLA. [*Turns to mirror, L., fixes hair, and turns*] Ah! The call-boy! I must go. [*Carroll starts to her, she kisses her hand to him, R. door, and exit*]

CARROLL. [*Alone, walking up and down*] What have I done? Promised to sail with Stella tomorrow—leave home, Alice? No, no, this is lunacy—sheer madness—I will not do it! [*Music of dance pianissimo, till curtain. At door, R., loud applause and cries and cheers in the distance*] Ha! She is on! How they cheer her! Yes, the whole world is at her feet. By Heaven! She shall be mine. I'll go with her at any cost—and what's the harm? I explain that I must sail in haste on pressing business. I'm gone six—eight weeks, that's all. Alice will never suspect; meanwhile, I'll conquer this woman who tortures us all. I'll—but while I'm gone, if Alice should be ill—unhappy—[*Enter Kraft, L. Carroll seizes him roughly by the collar*] Ah! I'm glad you have come.

KRAFT. [*Startled*] Mein Gott! What is it?

CARROLL. You are a man of the world, know life and passion well—tell me, do you know any way to cure an insane infatuation?

KRAFT. Yes! Plow oud your prains—

CARROLL. Come, come! I'm serious! For God's sake! Tell me how to cure a passion that is irresistible. [*Throws himself at table, R.*]

KRAFT. Gratify it, and it will go as quick as it came.

CARROLL. A wild, intense desire possesses every sense I have. [*Crosses to L.*]

KRAFT. Satisfy it only vonce, and you are safed.

CARROLL. Suppose to do this I must leave home, wife, honor—behind?

KRAFT. Oh! De teffle! Den you must conquer it.

CARROLL. But how? How? She dazzles, snubs, entices, fascinates, until I lose my will, and every sense of honor, right or duty.

KRAFT. In a word, are mat pro tem, a monomaniac possessed by a woman; you are sane only ven she is away.

CARROLL. Yes! I have a sane moment now—help me to make the most of it.

KRAFT. It's a very bad case of *maladie d'amour*—desperate diseases require desperate remedies; send for de police—make dem lock you up.

CARROLL. Damn your confounded joking! [*Crosses to R. Walks up and down, R.*]

KRAFT. I am not joking. You are in a dangerous condition—nothing will safe you but—Larkins' Pack.

CARROLL. Larkins' Pack! What's that?

KRAFT. I haf a frent called Larkins who used to have feets.

CARROLL. Fits!

KRAFT. Yes! Topsy feets—vent on sprees and mate a peast of himself. Frents had to feesh him oud of parrooms, police cells, and country ditches. Ven der feet was ofer, zen came remorse, cold water and family prayers.

CARROLL. Poor devil!

KRAFT. At last he swore to pe cured, so whenever he felt de feet comin' on, he wrote to a mad doctor who at once locked him up—den Larkins would cry for drink and svare and veep and struggle, and preak efferyting! Den dey vould take him py de neck and legs, and pack him tight in cold vater, and plankets; zat vas enough—in a veek he vas vell. [*Rises*] My tear frent, you are going to haf a feet—take my advice—try Larkins' Pack. It vill cool you off.

CARROLL. Hang your nonsense! You have neither sense nor sympathy.

KRAFT. I haf both, put I know you cannot cure prain fever with a glass of lemonade. [*Loud applause and cheers outside*]

CARROLL. She is off—they are calling her—they are wild with delight. Shall I go, or not go?

KRAFT. I bet a t'ousand you vill go.

CARROLL. [*Rushing off*] You are right. I must—I will go! [*Exit, R.*]

KRAFT. [*Laughing*] And I'll keep Stella here. [*Exit*]

ALICE. [*Steals from screen, haggard, pale and staring, like one going mad, looking after Carroll*] Gone! Gone to her—deserted. All my years of love, of trust, of glad devotion, forgotten for one who despises, insults him. Oh, I have lived years in an hour. Now I am old, despairing. Oh, God! Why do you teach us to love in a world so vile as this? [*Sobs at chair, R.*]

HART. [*Entering, L., not seeing Alice, looks behind screen*] Where is she? [*Suddenly sees Alice*] Ah, madame, what is it? [*Lifting her up*] Good heavens! You are ill, weak.

ALICE. Yes, I am ill—very ill; [*Pushing him away*] but not weak. No, no! Not weak! That I never will be. [*Applause and cries of "bravo!" outside*] Do you hear that? [*R.C.*]

HART. [*L.*] Alas! I do, madame.

ALICE. That has made him mad.

HART. Whom, madame?

ALICE. My husband. He has seen the world worship this woman—it has made him mad to make her worship him. It is not she who has robbed me of his love, it is that crowd who cheer her. Ah! My eyes are open now, and my heart is breaking. Now I know, that with men, vanity is stronger than love. [*Turns up, C. Applause outside*]

HART. [*Crosses, looks out door, R.*] Ah, madame, see, she is coming! Come away, you have seen too much. You are not strong. You must not act this farce out now.

ALICE. [*Rising grandly*] You are right, the farce is ended, but the battle begins. I act no more—I fight—fight to the bitter end. [*Rushes off*]

CURTAIN

ACT III.

SCENE: *Same as Act I. Bessie discovered seated at table, asleep. Pause. Doorbell heard ringing outside, R. Another pause. Bell rings harder.*

BESS. [*Starting up*] What's that? [*Bell rings violently*] Dear me! The mistress! [*Exit hurriedly. Pause. Bessie heard outside*] Oh, madame! Forgive me! You were so late, I fell asleep. [*Enter Alice, followed by Hartmann and Bessie*]

ALICE. [*To Bessie*] Has my brother returned? [*At table, L.*]

BESS. [*C.*] No, ma'am.

ALICE. [*To Hartmann, R.*] Has my hus—has Mr. Clandenning been here?

BESS. No, ma'am, not a soul has been here the whole evening, and it grew so late I fell asleep; but really, ma'am, I couldn't help it.

ALICE. [*Nervously*] There, there! That will do! Leave the room, but do not go to bed—I may need you. I'll ring when you're wanted. [*Goes up to fire*]

BESS. [*Going, R.*] Very well, ma'am. [*Aside, as she goes out*] What's the matter? She's awful nervous—something's happened. I'll warrant I won't sleep now. [*Exit, R.*]

HART. Now, madame, what are you going to do?

ALICE. I shall sail tomorrow on the *Alaska*, with my husband.

HART. He will know then that you have found him out.

ALICE. Yes.

HART. But do you think that wise, madame?

ALICE. Why not?

HART. Excuse an old man for intruding advice at such a time, but I have lived long and know human nature well. I fear if your husband discovers that you have played the detective—

ALICE. Speak plain English—say played the spy upon him. Yes—he couldn't forgive me—he couldn't forgive me! [*Looks out of window*]

HART. Well, madame, you see—

ALICE. You are right. I cannot go with him, but oh! I will not lose him.
[*Comes down, sits at piano*]

HART. [*Advancing to C.*] No, madame, I think there's a way.

ALICE. [*Eagerly*] What is it? What is it?

HART. Permit me to go to Mr. Kraft in your name, and say that you must see him here at once. He can help you better than anyone else.

ALICE. What! Expose to that man, her manager—a stranger to me—my misery?

HART. Ah! Madame, I was a stranger but now.

ALICE. Yes—you are old, fatherly, sympathetic. Mr. Kraft is young, cynical—he will laugh at a sorrow that is sacred to me.

HART. You do not know him, madame; I do. He is as kind at heart as he is cruel in speech. [*Pause*]

ALICE. [*Rises, goes up to window*] What shall I say to him?

HART. Tell him all. Believe me, he is the safest person to assist you.

ALICE. Go, then! Go! Tell Mr. Kraft to come here right away.

HART. Never fear. I promise he shall come. [*Exit, R.*]

ALICE. [*Looking around, sits C.*] But a little while ago, this was my home. How happy I was—how I loved my dear old Carroll—how I trusted him. To me, he was all honor, loyalty, manhood—and now, how it is all changed; home, happiness—all gone—gone forever, with my faith in him! [*Wipes tears away*] Ah! I must not cry, I must fight. Yes! Fight with heart, brains, even hands if need be, to save the little that's left—the honor of his name. [*Turns, glances at clock on mantel, C., rises, takes wrap from L. table. Exit, L. Jack is heard singing outside. He enters tipsily, looking at key in his hand, from R.*]

JACK. That's my ni' key—hic—I thought it ud be my mo'n' key 'fore I got in. Hic—that's the drunk'st key ev' I saw—hic. [*Looks around and fumbles with key, trying to put it in his pocket*] S'lucky my sister's gone to bed—what'd she say if she saw me now—torn, and tight? Hic—yes, tight for the first time—tight for Stella. [*Raising his voice*] Proud of it! By George! Hush! Keep quiet, you fool—you'll wake 'em up. [*Drops key with great noise*] Keep quiet, I say! [*Looks at key on floor*] Damn that key! It's always makin' a noise—always gettin' every place. [*Comic business, trying to pick up key. Strikes bell loudly*] Just my luck! The quieter I keep, the more noise I make.

BESS. [*Entering*] Did you ring, ma'am? [*Seeing Jack on floor, starts and exclaims*] Lord! Mr. Jack!

JACK. S'sh—you wake 'em up. Why, my gracious! 'S that you, Bessie? Jus' giv' me a lif'. [*Bessie helps him up*] S'thanks. [*Shaking her head*] How are you? That is—my gracious—you're awful pretty.

BESS. Oh! Mr. Jack! How could you?

JACK. Wha's matter?

BESS. I do believe you're tight.

JACK. Well, who wouldn't be? It's all Stella. She's to blame.

BESS. Stella! Who's she?

JACK. [*Singing*] "She's a daisy, is my Stella Ann"*

BESS. Hush! Mr. Jack, the mistress may come.

JACK. No danger—she's abed.

BESS. No, she's waiting up for Mr. Clandenning.

JACK. Oh! She is, is she? [*Laughing*] Won't he catch it when he comes! He's full, too—full's three goats an—an—a old cow. [*Doorbell is heard downstairs*]

BESS. Oh! Good Lord, sir, someone's coming!

JACK. Let 'em come, I don't care. I'm goin' to wa' here for Carroll. [*Bell rings again*]

BESS. Very well, sir, I shall have to let them in. [*Exit, R.*]

JACK. [*Alone*] I'm tired—very tired. Carroll sent me home and said he'd be right along. [*Sitting on sofa near fire*] Guess he's tired—too tired to get home—lucky dog! [*Lying down in such a way that he is hidden from the audience behind the back of the sofa, sings tipsily*] Oh! Carry me back. Oh! Carry me back, to Stella's happy old floor. [*Falls asleep. Enter Bessie, followed by Hartmann and Kraft, R.*]

BESS. Walk in, gentlemen, and I'll tell Mrs. Clandenning you are here. [*As she goes*] Why do they come at this hour? It's queer, very queer. [*Looks around room as she gets to door*] I wonder where Mr. Jack is? Lord! What a queer night! [*Exit, L.*]

KRAFT. Mr. Hartmann, vill you blease explain—?

HART. Mrs. Clandenning will do that.

KRAFT. No—but prepare me for de situation. You come to me ant say, "Mr. Kraft, eef you don't come at vonce to Mr. Clandenning's house, dere vill pe a pig scandal." I ask vat you mean. You say, "Hurry! Don't lose a momend—you shall know all ven you get here," and you look so plack at me dat I am frightened and follow you double queek, like a leetle tog on a string. Don't look so funeral. Speak! What's the matter?

HART. Something terrible!

KRAFT. Terrible?

HART. Yes! There will be a tragedy in this house if you don't interfere. [*Jack's head appears over back of sofa*]

KRAFT. Ach! You trive me mat! Vat ees it?

* Cf. Note on page 234.

HART. I can tell you no more than this—Mrs. Clandenning is in trouble with her husband. [*Jack sits up, interested*]

KRAFT. [*Gives a loud whistle*] I understand—poor Carroll! I feel sorry—ferry sorry for him.

HART. Sorry for him! It is she that's to be pitied.

KRAFT. Yes, he's a little vicked himself—he must not pe too hart eef she, too, has her leetle tistractions.

HART. What do you mean?

KRAFT. Ven de man's away, de vife vill play. Eef he vill go to the club, he must not pe surprised if she koes to de teffle.

HART. Are you a fool?

KRAFT. [*Angrily*] Yes! Tam dese woman scrapes! I am a fool to come here—a pig fool.

JACK. That's so.

KRAFT. [*Turning angrily at Hartmann*] That's so! You call me a fool to come here, ven it ees you who made me come.

HART. You don't understand.

KRAFT. Tam your impudence! Vare's my hat? I vill go.

HART. But, Mr. Kraft, what are you talking about?

KRAFT. Ach! You are crazy! [*Picks up hat and starts off*]

HART. No, no! You shall not!

KRAFT. Ah! Ve shall see.

HART. [*Struggling with him*] No, no! There's some mistake! [*Both raise their voices*]

KRAFT. [*C., tries to pass*] You are a scoundrel!

HART. You are cruelly wrong! [*R.*]

ALICE. [*Enters, R., astounded*] Gentlemen! Gentlemen! [*Remains L., near door. Kraft and Hartmann separate, embarrassed. Kraft, C., Hartmann, R.*]

JACK. [*Aside*] Lord! It's sis! I'll subside. [*Sinks into sofa out of sight*]

HART. Ah! Madame, I'm glad you have come. As I told you, Mr. Kraft is the kindest, the best of men—and but now was declaring here to me, in the most enthusiastic way, his entire devotion to your service.

KRAFT. [*Aside*] Mein Gott! He's kracked! Kracked all ofer.

ALICE. [*To Kraft*] My dear sir, we are almost strangers—how shall I thank you for—?

KRAFT. [*Interrupting*] Don't! Don't mention it. [*Goes up to window. Alice crosses to Hartmann*]

HART. I will leave you, madame. Believe me, you can tell Mr. Kraft all, without fear. He's a little cranky, but he's so kind and true, and can be trusted.

KRAFT. I vish I vas anywhere oud of dis. I'd rather pe in jail.

ALICE. [*To Hartmann, at door*] You shall know the result tomorrow. Till then, good friend—

HART. Yes—friend and servant, madame. [*Kisses her hand and exit, R. Pause. Kraft looks out of window, back to Alice, hands in pockets. She looks at him a little*]

ALICE. Won't you sit down, Mr. Kraft?

KRAFT. [*Shortly and gruffly*] Thanks! [*Sits at table, L.*]

ALICE. [*Remaining standing, C., hand on chair, C.*] I hope you will pardon me for thus taxing your good nature?

KRAFT. [*Stiffly*] Oh! I am used to that.

ALICE. So late, too.

KRAFT. Ah! As for that, it is never too late.

ALICE. But there is not a moment to be lost.

KRAFT. Ah! Vat can I do?

ALICE. Save me!

KRAFT. [*Aside*] Ah! I thought so—de olt story. Ah! I see, there ees koing to pe a little konjugal storm. You vant a pilot?

ALICE. Yes.

KRAFT. In consequence of a slight imprudence—a leetle frivolity—[*Satirically*] for which, of course—you are not in de least to plame?

ALICE. [*Not noticing irony*] Ah, sir, it has gone far beyond imprudence!

KRAFT. [*Amazed*] Ah! Den de little intrigue has reached a climax?

ALICE. A climax! He is on the point of leaving me.

KRAFT. [*Puzzled*] He is koing away?

ALICE. [*Hanging her head*] Yes.

KRAFT. [*Aside*] Her lofer is going away. Oh, it is simple, den. [*Aloud*] Would it not be wise to let de young fellow go, madame?

ALICE. Mr. Kraft, it would simply—oh!—I couldn't live! I couldn't live! [*Walks down, R.*]

KRAFT. You lofe him, den, ferry mooch?

ALICE. [*Walking upstage*] Oh!

KRAFT. [*Aside*] A desperate case—poor Carroll! Poor Carroll!

ALICE. Oh, sir, help me—help me to keep him here.

KRAFT. [*With great dignity*] You forget, madame, I am your husband's friend. His sincere friend.

ALICE. For that very reason you must help me to keep him here.

KRAFT. [*Shocked*] Oh! Madame! How can you say dat?

ALICE. But don't you understand, he is going away?

KRAFT. Good! De sooner he's kone, de petter. Let him ko!

ALICE. Let him go?

KRAFT. Vy not? Anyting for a quiet life.

ALICE. I don't want a quiet life without him. I'd rather die.

KRAFT. [*Aside, and wiping the perspiration from his face*] Phew! Dis is de vorst case I ebber saw. [*Rising, aloud*] Excuse me, madame, it is impossible! I could not help you if I would, and I would not if I could.

ALICE. [*Rises, crosses and sits at piano, L.*] Then I shall lose him—lose him—forever. [*Sobbing*]

KRAFT. [*Aside, snivelling*] She almost makes me a draiter to my friend. [*Aloud*] Oh! Madame, have you no lofe left for your poor husband?

ALICE. It is because I love my husband so much, that I cannot let him go.

KRAFT. [*Standing, C.*] Mein Gott! You amaze me, madame!

ALICE. Amaze you! Isn't it perfectly natural?

KRAFT. [*Violently*] No! It is the most absurd thing I effer heart—mein Gott!

ALICE. [*Astounded*] Absurd!

KRAFT. Yes, madame. Absurd! If you lofe your husband so much, you should be glad to let de other fellow go.

ALICE. The other fellow! Whom do you mean?

KRAFT. Vell, eef I must pe blain, your lofer.

ALICE. [*Puzzled and amazed*] My lover?

KRAFT. Off korse! De man you vant to tie for.

ALICE. [*Rises, goes to L. of table*] Mr. Kraft, I never have nor never shall love but one man—my husband.

KRAFT. You lofe your husband?

ALICE. Yes, in spite of all.

KRAFT. And you haf no lofer?

ALICE. Mr. Kraft, you forget, I am a married woman. [*Going up, C.*]

KRAFT. No—it ees for dat reason—[*Aside*] Oh! I am a fool. I've made a mistake. [*Goes down, L.*]

ALICE. Is it so strange that a wife should love her husband? [*At table, R.C.*]

KRAFT. Well, in society, eet ees not quite de fashion. [*His whole manner changing to courtly reverence*] Pardon me, madame, I beseech you be seated. Dere is nodings you can ask dat I shall not be proud to do for you. Sit down—dell me all. [*Alice sits, R. of table*] What ees de matter?

ALICE. You know my husband?

KRAFT. Yes—de pest fellow in de vorld!

ALICE. Isn't he! Generous—kind—lovable.

KRAFT. Oh! Irresistible!

ALICE. Well, he is going to run away.

KRAFT. With some other lady?

ALICE. [*Hangs her head*] With an actress.

KRAFT. [*Half rising*] Stella! My Stella?

ALICE. Yes.

KRAFT. Nonsense! Impossible!

ALICE. I am sure of it. He has agreed to sail with her on the *Alaska* to-morrow morning.

KRAFT. Vat! She! Stella—has agreed to this? [*Alice nods*] Ah! Dat I vill not pelieve.

ALICE. I know it.

KRAFT. [*Turning on her suspiciously*] How?

ALICE. Do not ask me! It is shame enough to confess the knowledge—it would be more to tell you how I gained it. But when I assure you on my honor—it is true, you will not doubt me?

KRAFT. It is madness.

ALICE. [*Rising, leaning over table*] Yes—that's why, in my agony, I dared to send for you to help me—and you will, for it is to save him from shame and remorse. She holds him only by the madness of his passion and vanity, but he is mine by the marriage tie—it is sacred.

KRAFT. If he does, he vill ko alone.

ALICE. Go alone!

KRAFT. Yes! For I will keep Stella here.

ALICE. No, no! Don't do that! I don't object to her going.

KRAFT. But if she goes, he will follow her. [*After walking about, thinking*] Ah! I haf eet! She shall go.

ALICE. And he?

KRAFT. You can stop him tonight, for a leetle time—till de poat has kone.

ALICE. How?

KRAFT. [*At table*] Haf him arrested. [*Jack's head appears above sofa*]

ALICE. Arrested! In what way?

KRAFT. Py de police.

ALICE. My husband arrested!

KRAFT. Yes, you can pretend he is running away wid something—your jewels—make a charge against him.

ALICE. [*Sits, R. of table*] He a thief! The soul of honor!

KRAFT. Hum! Yes—dat is unfortunate. Vell, den charge him vid cruelty—say he peat you.

ALICE. Mr. Kraft, he never said an unkind word to me in his life.

KRAFT. Mein Gott! It ees too bad he is so almighty good. Ah! I tell you—try Larkins' Pack. Arrest him for insanity, and gif him a dose of cold vater.

ALICE. Oh, sir, I beg of you do not joke at such a time as this.

KRAFT. Choke! I vas neffer so earnest! Ah, ha! I see! I see! [*Sits, L. of table*] Eet is all right—we haf him safe.

ALICE. Ah!

KRAFT. You need make no charge against him at all. He can pe arrested py mistake, for somebody else.

ALICE. How can that be?

KRAFT. I find a detective—dey always haf warrants in dere pockets for scalavags dey are looking for. Dey take him for von of dose scalavags.

ALICE. [*Rises*] He! My darling a scalawag!

KRAFT. Oh! Only py mistake—dat's nodings—for instance, dey mistake him for Soapy Jim.

ALICE. Soapy Jim! Who's he?

KRAFT. A nice, soft, wily little sneak thief.

ALICE. Oh! But Carroll is not like that at all.

KRAFT. Vell! Dare's Slippery Sam.

ALICE. Who's he?

KRAFT. A pold, prave, prutal purglar, ferry hart to catch.

ALICE. My husband is not a bit like that.

KRAFT. Dat's so! He's easily caught—too easily. Ah! [*Rises*] I know de man—he looks just like your husband—tresses vell, speaks sweet, and deceives de men as easy as de vimmen.

ALICE. Who is it?

KRAFT. Hungry Joe—a nice, shentlemanly punko steerer.

ALICE. No, no, no! This is all impossible. I couldn't humiliate him. [*Sinks into chair, R.*]

KRAFT. Vat can we do den?

ALICE. You can see him—persuade him not to go. [*Jack sinks onto sofa again*]

KRAFT. Mein Gott! He vill not listen to me. [*Alice crosses, L.*] If I speak for myself alone, he will laugh in my face, or get mat and tell me to go to de—de hot springs. [*Down R.*]

ALICE. [*C., hand on chair*] Then if you cannot help me, there is but one way left. I will fight for him here at his hearthstone, where she can never come to madden him. The only prison he shall have I will make with these two arms.

KRAFT. Ach! You are a hangel, madame. [*Seizing her hand*]

ALICE. Forgive me for paining you with my troubles. I needed advice; I turned—puzzled and distracted, wretched—to anyone who could afford me hope of help.

KRAFT. Ah! Madame, I pless you for showing me such modesty, love, devotion—as I nefer pelieved could come to this pad world. I svare he shall not go. I'll arrest him first, myself.

ALICE. No, you must not. Promise me not to do that.

KRAFT. I can refuse you nothing.

ALICE. Then good night, and may good fortune follow you for your goodness to me. [*Sits at table, L.*]

KRAFT. [*Wiping eyes*] Good night, madame. I nefer pelieved pefore I vould pe such a fool. [*Turning at door, R.*] Madame, I promised I vould not arrest your husband, but if you fail to keep him here, and find he is surely going, you may change your mind—in dat kase, gif me a signal, and I vill stop him at any cost. [*Jack's head appears above sofa*] I shall haf a detective watch dis house. If you light dat cantle and poot eet on de table in dat window, Mr. Clandenning will pe arrested for Hungry Joe.

ALICE. [*Sitting at table, absently*] Very well.

KRAFT. Remember! Cantle—vindow—Clandenning—Joe. Stella kone and you habby. [*Jack disappears*] Ach! A taste of a cell vould do him good. [*Aloud, at door*] Vonce more, madame, pelieve me, foreffer your debtor, and your slave. [*Exit*]

ALICE. [*Alone*] He will soon be here to tell me he is called away—to requite my love with a lie. When he comes, what can I say to stop him? Words are worthless weapons in a fight like this; deeds, deeds alone can touch him, but what can I do? [*Thinks. Rings bell*]

BESS. [*Enters, L.*] Did you ring, ma'am?

ALICE. Yes. Go down to the kitchen and make a good fire.

BESS. At this hour, ma'am?

ALICE. Precisely. Hurry! [*Bessie is going*] Lay out the tea-set Mr. Clandenning gave me on my wedding day.

BESS. Yes, ma'am.

ALICE. Wait for me in the kitchen. I'll be down there in a minute or two.

BESS. Very well, ma'am. [*As she goes*] The whole house is gone mad! [*Exit*]

ALICE. Now if he wishes to leave me, I will bar his way with smiles and laughter, and gentle deeds. I will fill his home so full of sunshine that perhaps all out there may grow dull and dark and dreary. Then he may stay—stay as I would have him—of his own free will. [*Going*] I will go wash away all

trace of tears; he shall not see a single shadow in my face. I'll hide my misery behind the lovelight in my eyes. [*Exit. Music stops*]

JACK. [*Coming forward from sofa, and turning it around*] Well! I'm blest! If that blooming brother-in-law of mine isn't the worst hound, and she the sweetest little saint! Hang Stella! No, no—I don't quite mean that. She's too pretty to hang, but, by George, I'd imprison her! Yes, imprison her for life, [*Singing*] "In a little cottage by the sea, where she'd never see—see—see, anyone but me—me—me." [*Sits, R., on sofa*]

CARROLL. [*Outside*] Bessie, tell Tom to go to my room and pack my trunk at once, and say I want a carriage here in an hour.

BESS. [*Outside*] Very well, sir.

JACK. Pack his trunk—he leaves tonight. Oh! We'll see about that.

CARROLL. [*Entering, R., seeing Jack*] What! You up still? [*Crossing to L., puts hat and coat on sofa near fire*]

JACK. [*Rises*] Yes. You see, precious brother, I didn't want to go without bidding you good night.

CARROLL. Well! Good night. It's late—hurry to bed.

JACK. [*Putting his arm about Carroll*] Dear old man— [*Making secretly a motion as though he'd like to punch his head*] You're such an awfully nice fellow.

CARROLL. [*Putting him off*] There, there! Don't be sentimental. Go to bed.

JACK. [*Going*] Yes—sleep's a good thing—it keeps the conscience clear. Good night, dear boy, sleep well. Shall I call you early, darling?

CARROLL. Get out!

JACK. Pleasant dreams, dear brother. If you have the nightmare, call me. [*Exit, laughing, R.*]

CARROLL. Idiot! Always giggling. Now to wake Alice, explain and get away. [*Starts to door, returns*] No—it is better to let her sleep. It will save a scene. I should find it hard work to face her sweet eyes with a pack of lies on my lips. No, I will write—it will be easier for both of us. [*Sits at desk, writes. Alice steals in and watches him, and as he encloses note in envelope, she kneels at his side*] How's this, Alice? Awake at this time of night?

ALICE. I couldn't sleep. I was thinking so much about you.

CARROLL. But, my dear child! These late hours will blight the roses in your cheeks. I see them fading now.

ALICE. What use of roses, when you are never near to notice them?

CARROLL. That sounds like reproach.

ALICE. Reproach to you who are working your life away for me? That would be ridiculous! No! It is myself I reproach.

CARROLL. Reproach yourself! What for, pray?

ALICE. Neglecting you, dear.

CARROLL. Oh! [*Laughing*]

ALICE. Yes, neglecting you abominably. When you left me this evening to go to your business at the bank, I began to think how hard, how unfair it was that you should toil and toil to give me everything, while I did nothing at all for you.

CARROLL. Good heavens! Alice, don't talk like this.

ALICE. If we were only poor, then I should take care of the house—prepare you dainty meals with my own fingers, help you to save instead of to spend your hard-earned money—show by a daily devotion of hand as well as heart, the divine depths of my true love for you.

CARROLL. My darling, all the toil of those dear little hands could never show me more than those sweet eyes.

ALICE. Oh! But it's so easy to talk and so hard to labor, dear. That's why you, with all your hard work, seem to love me more than I love you, and that thought makes me jealous. But I am determined to get even with you, sweetheart, and so I begin tonight with a little surprise for you. [*Rising, crosses to L., rings bell*]

CARROLL. A surprise! Of what kind, dear? [*Enter Bessie, with tray, which she places on table, L. Exit, R.*]

ALICE. [*With a magnificent flourish*] Behold! Your majesty is served.

CARROLL. [*Rises*] Lunch!

ALICE. Steaming hot! [*Pointing to herself*] *Et voilà le chef!* [*Pushes chairs to table*]

CARROLL. [*Aside*] Lunch! When I have been eating for two hours!

ALICE. Now, then, monsieur, be seated. Eat with the same delight I cooked, and I shall be the proudest little wife in the world. [*Carroll hesitates, embarrassed*] Well, sir! Do you hear? The viands wait—take care or they will wilt.

CARROLL. [*Annoyed*] Really! Alice, this is so entirely unexpected!

ALICE. Then you are not pleased?

CARROLL. Why, yes—but then, you see— [*Alice crosses to hide tears*] There! [*Aside*] Now I have hurt her, brute that I am! [*Crossing to her, and putting his arm about her*] Come, come, little girl, don't be grieved. Why! There are tears in your eyes.

ALICE. Oh, Carroll! The salad was lovely. I thought you'd be pleased.

CARROLL. Am I ever otherwise, dear?

ALICE. Never! That's why I do so long to do some little thing for you.

CARROLL. [*Aside*] Ah! What a wretch I am!

ALICE. Do you know, when I was cooking this supper, I sang all the time, actually sang—so glad was I with the hope that you would enjoy it.

CARROLL. [*Gaily, rising*] And so I will, darling! Come, come! Let's sit down and be gay. [*Crosses to L., sits L. of table*]

ALICE. You will really eat it?

CARROLL. Every bit of it. [*Aside*] I'll die of surfeit.

ALICE. Now I'm simply the proudest and happiest woman alive.

CARROLL. Confound it! I'm happy myself, and bliss is bringing an appetite.

ALICE. [*Sitting at table and serving*] May it grow on what it feeds. There! Taste! Sweetbreads, washed, dressed and savored with a thousand blessings for you.

CARROLL. [*Tasting*] Delicious! Perfect!

ALICE. Honest?

CARROLL. Yes, indeed! I taste the blessings in the sauce.

ALICE. [*Embraces him over table*] You dear old darling! Try that. [*Helps him to salad*]

CARROLL. [*Tastes, exclaims*] Good heavens!

ALICE. What's the matter?

CARROLL. Eh! Oh! nothing.

ALICE. [*Half rises*] Isn't the salad right?

CARROLL. Oh! Magnificent! It's so sweet. [*Aside*] Infernally sweet!

ALICE. Why don't you eat it, then?

CARROLL. Well, hm! You see, you put sugar in it.

ALICE. Wasn't that right?

CARROLL. It would have been sweet enough without sugar, so long as your dear hands prepared it.

ALICE. [*Very soberly*] Mr. Clandenning, I warn you such speeches are dangerous. If you're not careful, I shall kiss you.

CARROLL. [*Opening his arms*] I dare you! [*She rushes into his arms, sits on his lap and kisses him*]

ALICE. There, sir! That will teach you not to say sweet things. [*Clock strikes two*]

CARROLL. [*Springing up*] Gracious! Two o'clock! Time you were asleep, hours ago. [*Crosses to R.*]

ALICE. Oh! I'm not in the least sleepy. [*Sits at piano*]

CARROLL. Not after the charades?

ALICE. Why should that make me sleepy?

CARROLL. Acting is such tiresome work.

ALICE. Yes, so it is—so it is.

CARROLL. [*Aside*] Hang it! I must get her to bed! The carriage may come any moment.

ALICE. [*Observing him*] He, too, has been acting. He wants to get away. Ah! it hasn't been any use!

CARROLL. Really, my darling, I must insist that you get some rest.

ALICE. Rest! [*Laughing*] I could no more rest than I could fly. [*Sings Irish song at piano*]

CARROLL. [*Irritated*] My dear Alice, are you crazy? [*Sitting on sofa, takes glass from table. Alice rises, waltzes over to him, singing French song. Crosses him, throws herself on lounge and bursts into a laugh*] What are you thinking of?

ALICE. I'm thinking of the first time we met, at the hop in Newport. Do you remember?

CARROLL. Perfectly!

ALICE. You waltzed with me, and that was the first time, sweet sir, you ever put your arm about my waist. [*Pulls up his hand, kisses it, and bursts into another laugh*]

CARROLL. [*Aside*] There she goes again! If she keeps on, the steamer will sail.

ALICE. [*Laughing*] Do you remember our first amateur play?

CARROLL. Yes—at the Ocean House.

ALICE. I played a country lass, and you a country lad. I danced a jig, and you said it was the prettiest thing you ever saw. By the way, that was the first time you ever made love to me.

CARROLL. [*Yawning*] Yes, and I've been making it ever since.

ALICE. [*Assuming sitting position*] Not very much lately, dear. In those sweet days of wooing, you used to make me sing.

CARROLL. Yes, I never get a chance now. [*Rises, goes up to mantel for a match*] May I smoke, madame?

ALICE. Anything you like, sir— [*Singing*] but leave me to languish alone. [*Carroll lights segar, Alice bursts into a laugh*]

CARROLL. What are you laughing at?

ALICE. Something so awfully funny.

CARROLL. What is it?

ALICE. Do you remember our first lover's quarrel? Oh! I shall never forget it. I thought you had left me forever— [*Laughing*] as though that were possible! Still, I believed it sincerely, and after crying till I could not speak for pain, I walked into the parlor and began to sing a song—and as I sang, you, who were moping under the window all the time, pretending to be gone, stole in quietly, and as I finished pulled me straight up on your great

strong heart. Oh, my! [*Kicking her feet*] Wasn't I just almost dead for joy! [*Turning to piano*] Let me see—what was that song? Oh! I have it! [*Sings song. As she does so, the segar falls from Carroll's hand. He goes slowly toward her and as she finishes, he draws her up on his breast*]

CARROLL. Alice!

ALICE. [*With hysterical sob*] Oh, Carroll! My darling! My life! [*They sink on sofa, she at his feet*]

CARROLL. There, there, dear! Why are you crying?

ALICE. Ah! The old sorrow comes back. But, no! You will never, never leave me again, will you? Will you?

CARROLL. Never! Never, sweetheart!

ALICE. [*Burying her face on his breast*] Thank God! Thank God!

BESS. [*Entering, L.*] Mr. Clandenning, Tom says the carriage has come. [*Carroll starts. Alice turns towards Bessie*]

ALICE. Carriage! What carriage?

CARROLL. [*Rises quickly*] That's all right. I will explain. Leave the room, Bessie.

BESS. [*As she goes*] My! But there's something wrong! [*Exit, L.*]

ALICE. [*Seated on floor by sofa, R.*] Well, dear, I'm waiting!

CARROLL. Waiting for what?

ALICE. For your explanation.

CARROLL. Oh, yes! Certainly! Concerning the carriage. It's very simple—that is, I mean, of course—the fact is, important business is pending—

ALICE. Ah! At half past two in the morning?

CARROLL. Yes—that does seem strange, don't it? Exactly! But you see, a friend of mine sails on the *Alaska* just before daylight.

ALICE. A very dear friend?

CARROLL. Oh! No, indeed! A mere business friend. It is necessary, however, for me to see him before he sails.

ALICE. Oh! It's a him?

CARROLL. Yes.

ALICE. You're quite sure of that?

CARROLL. Of course! Do you suppose I would be fool enough to have business with a woman?

ALICE. Business! Oh, I see! Yes, I didn't think of that.

CARROLL. You know, my dear, business is a despot that rules us night as well as day.

ALICE. Yes! So I've discovered. Won't it do as well if you write?

CARROLL. No! A personal interview is absolutely essential.

ALICE. [*Kneeling*] Oh! I've a lovely idea!

CARROLL. Ah!

ALICE. I will go with you.

CARROLL. [C.] You go with me?

ALICE. [*Rises, crosses to door, L.*] Certainly! The ride will do me good.

CARROLL. Nonsense! You ought to be sound asleep by this time, and besides, I can't talk business before you.

ALICE. Oh! That's all right! I'll wait on deck till you get through.

CARROLL. [*Aside*] Alice, you talk like a child. I cannot permit you to go. You must retire at once. I insist.

ALICE. [*Half kneeling on chair, L. of table*] Oh! But I should so enjoy going with you.

CARROLL. It's so utterly absurd! I will not hear of it. Will you do as I tell you?

ALICE. Yes, dear. I promised at the altar to love, honor and obey you. I would obey you, if it broke my heart.

CARROLL. Yes—you always have.

ALICE. And always will, as long as you will let me.

CARROLL. [*Getting hat*] That will be for as long as we live, darling. [*Taking her in his arms*] Now good-by, precious little woman. [*Kissing her tenderly*]

ALICE. Good-by!

CARROLL. No! I mean, *au revoir*! [*She clings to him as he goes to door, R., talking incessantly. When she reaches door, she passes in front of him, barring the way*]

ALICE. [*Suddenly bursting into a laugh*] Do you think I'm going to let you go as you are?

CARROLL. Why not?

ALICE. [*Taking him C., showing him a rip in his coat*] Look at that!

CARROLL. Pshaw! That's nothing!

ALICE. Nothing! It's everything to me. Your friend would think you were a bachelor, or had a very bad wife. Either would be disgraceful at your age. [*Taking his hat*] So, sir, off with that coat. [*Gets needle and thread. Puts hat on and gets workbasket from table, up R.*]

CARROLL. [*Amazed*] But, my dear Alice!

ALICE. There's no use, sir, I've a wife's right to mend your clothes, and I'll be an awful rebel if you resist. [*Takes hold of coat to strip it off*]

CARROLL. [*Letting coat go*] I suppose I must submit.

ALICE. [*Curling up on sofa, and beginning to sew*] You see, women have some rights that even husbands are bound to respect.

CARROLL. [*Aside*] By heavens! If she don't hurry, I'll never get away!

ALICE. Carroll, dear, come here. [*Carroll crosses to her*] Sit down on that stool. [*Carroll hesitates*] I've been at your feet so long, suppose you take your turn and see how it feels?

CARROLL. [*Sitting on stool*] Certainly!

ALICE. [*Leaning over and kissing him*] If you knew how handsome you looked in that attitude, you'd never get up.

CARROLL. Do you think I'm so vain, then?

ALICE. Vain! No, indeed! Only women are vain! But men have a certain sense of irresistible charm, which is sometimes terrible in its consequences, you know.

CARROLL. How terrible?

ALICE. When I went to act tonight, I learned something that perfectly astounded me.

CARROLL. What was it?

ALICE. The story of a dear friend of mine, who was on the verge of despair.

CARROLL. [*Laughing*] Indeed! How tragic!

ALICE. Oh! You may laugh, but it's no joke to her, poor thing. She's about to lose her husband.

CARROLL. I beg pardon! Is he dying?

ALICE. Worse than that! He is going mad.

CARROLL. By George! That is hard!

ALICE. Yes, fearfully hard for her. He is happy in his madness, but she—she suffers an agony of mind and heart that he is too insane either to suspect or to understand.

CARROLL. What is the form of his madness?

ALICE. An infatuation that dulls all sense in him—an insane possession that prompts him to wreck a happy home and leads him on to humiliation, to disgrace, to destruction.

CARROLL. It must be an extraordinary kind of—

ALICE. Oh! Not at all! They tell me it is very common.

CARROLL. What is it?

ALICE. A craze for a woman who is not his wife—an actress— [*Carroll starts*] There, now! You've made me lose my thread! I wish you'd keep still! Here! Suppose you repair the mischief. [*Gives him needle and thread. He takes it and tries*] The worst part of this case to me is the silliness of the wife— [*Laughing*] the little fool is just breaking her heart. Honest, now—don't you think any woman is an idiot to care a snap of her finger for such a man as that?

CARROLL. Well—ye—yes, I suppose she is.

ALICE. Pshaw! How your hand trembles—fatigue from overwork, dear. [*Kisses him*] Here, I'll do it myself. [*Takes needle and threads it*]

CARROLL. [*Aside*] My God! This is torture!

ALICE. I tried to reason with the simpleton—told her the sooner she lost such a heartless, unprincipled villain, the better for her. What do you suppose she said to that?

CARROLL. Really! I can't imagine.

ALICE. [*Laughing*] I declare! She began to defend him—to recall to me all his good qualities—to remind me of his generosity, tenderness—to swear he was not responsible any more than a madman. What do you think of that?

CARROLL. [*Rising*] Excuse me, my dear, but hang it! I don't care to think of it at all.

ALICE. [*Finishing her work*] Oh! But tell me just this much: don't you think that any wife who is true and devoted, degrades herself to make excuses for a husband who turns his back on her fidelity, and willingly, recklessly, forgets her love and his own honor?

CARROLL. [*Up C.*] Good heavens, Alice! How can I say? Hang this romantic rubbish! I—I—

ALICE. [*Rising with coat*] Excuse me, dear—I have done. I shall not detain you another instant. [*Helps him on with coat. As he gets coat on, Alice gasps and staggers—falls at his feet. Music*]

CARROLL. [*Turning and catching her with a cry of terror*] Alice! Alice! What is it?

ALICE. I don't know! My heart—air—air!

CARROLL. Oh, my God! Alice! My darling! Speak to me!

ALICE. [*Rises, caresses him*] It's nothing, dear. It's nothing! Only a passing spasm—Air—a little air—that's all I need.

CARROLL. Ah! The carriage! A ride! It will do you good.

ALICE. Ah! I may go with you, then?

CARROLL. Yes, yes! You shall go with me always, my darling.

ALICE. [*With a sudden cry of joyful triumph*] Ah! I have won! I have won!

CARROLL. What do you mean?

ALICE. Nothing! I am silly—excited. I'm all right now. Wait here, I will get my things, and then [*Crossing to door*] we will go to ride together. I shall nestle forever close in your honest arms. [*Exit L. Music stops*]

CARROLL. [*Alone, sinking into chair and wiping the perspiration from his face*] Phew! What a night! How strangely Alice has behaved! What does it mean, her waiting up for me—her reminders of the past, her feverish excitement and the story of her friend? [*Starting up*] My God! Can she

suspect? Could she have heard? Nonsense! Who could have told her? No one knew but Stella and myself. She couldn't have heard. [*Enter Jack, quietly, listening*] And yet— Well, no matter. One thing is certain; I have learned in time what a miserable, contemptible wretch I am. If I had gone and she had heard the truth, it would have killed her. Thank God! I have realized this in time.

JACK. [*Enters, R.*] So-ho! You have not yet vamoosed, eh?

CARROLL. What! You up still?

JACK. Yes, I had the nightmare—dreamed you had eloped with Stella.

CARROLL. Hush! Hold your tongue! What are you talking about?

JACK. How can I tell you if I hold my tongue?

CARROLL. How dare you talk of my eloping?

JACK. How dare you think of eloping?

CARROLL. Hang your impudence!

JACK. Hang your rascality!

CARROLL. If you don't mind, I'll thrash you.

JACK. If you don't mind, I'll call your wife and tell her why you ordered the carriage at the door.

CARROLL. You know, then?

JACK. [*Crossing to L.*] All—about Stella, the *Alaska*, and yourself.

CARROLL. [*Seizing him*] You villain! I understand now—you have already told my wife!

JACK. Gently, brother—I don't want to be too harsh, but frankly, you lie.

CARROLL. What!

JACK. I have not told your wife, and by Heaven—I will not tell her—on two conditions!

CARROLL. [*Flinging him off*] What conditions?

JACK. [*Falling into chair near table at window, and taking segar out of his pocket*] First give me a light.

CARROLL. Wait on yourself.

JACK. If you wish me to keep quiet—I say, give me a light.

CARROLL. [*Striking a match*] Hang your infernal nonsense!

JACK. I don't want a match. Light that candle—my segar pulls hard—the candle suits me best.

CARROLL. [*Aside, lighting candle*] Irritating youngster!

JACK. [*Aside*] The signal was that candle lighted, and on this table. I don't think he'll sail tonight. [*Carroll comes with light*] Put it on that table. I'm not quite ready. [*Carroll puts light on table*] Now my sweet, submissive friend, my next condition is that you give me a check, and send me with Stella in your place.

CARROLL. [C.] Are you crazy?

JACK. [*Coming down, L.C.*] Oh, no! Nothing of that sort. [*Aside*] I've given him a check, and one good check deserves another. [*Rising*] Duteous husband of my beloved sister, consent or [*Raising his voice*] I cry Stella all over the house.

CARROLL. Keep quiet, you fool!

JACK. Do you consent?

CARROLL. Yes.

JACK. Then hurry with me to the club—it's still open—you can draw the check there. [*Crosses, R.*]

CARROLL. [*Aside*] It's the only way. I'll get rid of him at the club and hasten back. [*Taking hat*] Come, be off!

JACK. [*Crosses to L., laughing*] Oh! Wise brother—repentant spouse—

CARROLL. [*Pushing him through door*] Get out! Get out! [*Exit. Music till curtain. Pause. Noise heard outside*]

CARROLL. [*Outside*] But I tell you there's some mistake.

DETECTIVE. [*Outside*] We'll settle that at the station.

CARROLL. This is infamous! Outrageous! [*Jack heard laughing. Laughter and voices die away in the distance*]

ALICE. [*Heard singing gaily outside. Enters*] Well, you dear old fellow, here I am, all— Why! Where is he? [*Business. Calls*] Carroll! Carroll! His hat's gone and he— [*Staggers to desk, discovers note*] This note, to me—his writing! [*Opens feverishly, reads*] "My darling. A crisis in business forces me to sail—*Alaska*." [*Drops letter*] Ah! The fight is over—I have lost! lost! lost! [*Falls to floor*]

CURTAIN

ACT IV.

SCENE: *Same as Act III. Alice discovered seated in chair, Bessie attending her.*

ALICE. There! That will do—I am stronger now. You may go to bed.

BESS. But, madame—

ALICE. Do as I tell you. I wish to be alone. Go! Good night!

BESS. Good night, madame. [*As she goes*] I'll not sleep a wink till *she* does. [*Exit*]

ALICE. [*Alone*] Deceived—deserted. All the sweet illusions of my once happy life gone, never to return. Where is he now? With her—laughing, perhaps, while my heart breaks. She fooling, despising him, while I wait here with a wealth of wifely love—hopeless and helpless. And she—if she

only knew that he was the husband of that little seamstress she undertook to teach, she would spurn him—she would force him back to me. Oh! Stella—Stella! If I had only told you all, you would have helped me—yes, more than anyone else. [*Rising*] Ah! I have been a fool—a miserable fool. [*Starts*] What's that? I heard a noise! [*Enter Jack, hat over eyes. Alice gives a cry of fear*] Ah! Who's there?

JACK. Why, sis! Up still?

ALICE. You! In this state?

JACK. [*Crossing, L.*] Yes—accident—explain tomorrow. I'm sleepy—let's go to bed.

ALICE. Where have you been?

JACK. On a lark— [*Laughing*] with the police.

ALICE. What are you saying?

JACK. I'm saying that I know all, little girl, that Cal is a very naughty boy, that Kraft is a brick; he kept his word, had a detective at the door, and now instead of enjoying the seclusion of a cabin on the *Alaska*, Cal is safely juggled at Ludlow as Thirsty Jack.

ALICE. What are you talking about?

JACK. Your husband.

ALICE. He has not gone? [*Noise outside*]

KRAFT. [*Outside*] Dat's nonsense. I shall dell you nodings.

CARROLL. This is infamous!

ALICE. [*With amazement, getting up quickly, stays with Jack*] Ah! His voice!

CARROLL. [*Entering*] When I was recognized at the station and released, the detective confessed that he received his instructions from you. That's why I sent for you. Now, sir, is this true?

KRAFT. [*Coolly smoking cigarette*] Vell—yes, it is.

CARROLL. How dare you!

KRAFT. Gott in himmel! I tid it to save you.

CARROLL. Save me! From what?

KRAFT. From killing your peautiful vife.

CARROLL. My wife! What do you know of her?

KRAFT. I know how—I mean—dat's my pizniss.

CARROLL. I demand an explanation.

KRAFT. I can dell you no more.

CARROLL. I say you shall!

KRAFT. My tear sir, I am vat you call a Duchman—very pig-head—even I make my mind I to not change it—I kick my pucket first.

CARROLL. So, sir, you positively refuse to explain further?

KRAFT. I refuse to say more dan dis: if dere has been anydings wrong here, you vas de first rascal, and I vas de second.

CARROLL. But my wife, sir, what has she to do with this?

KRAFT. Oh! Nodings! Nodings! I alone am to plame.

CARROLL. Then, sir, you are a scoundrel!

KRAFT. [*Starting*] Vat! [*Suddenly laughs*] Come, come. Ton't pe so tragic—it vas all a choke.

CARROLL. Ah! A joke—very good—I, too, can joke. [*Crosses and locks doors, R. and L.*]

KRAFT. [*Nervously, crosses to L.*] What are you going to do?

CARROLL. I'm going to—that's my business.

KRAFT. Put—sir, dis is a outrage.

CARROLL. True—outrage for outrage—I arrest you as you did me, and keep you here till the *Alaska* sails. How do you like my joke?

KRAFT. But—mein Gott! Stella—she vill sail midoud me.

CARROLL. So she shall, unless you explain at once. There's a mystery here relative to my wife; if you refuse to clear it up, you stay here till morning.

KRAFT. Your vife is an angel—if you keep me here till next year, I vill say no more. [*Crosses, L.*]

CARROLL. Very well! [*Kraft turns*] You are my prisoner.

ALICE. [*Coolly unlocking door, R.*] Don't be too sure. [*Kraft and Carroll turn, amazed*] Mr. Kraft, the door is open—you are free.

KRAFT. Ah! Madame! [*Starts toward her. Carroll puts up his hand and stops Kraft*]

CARROLL. [*To Kraft*] One moment. [*To Alice*] Pardon me, I believe I am master in this house. I have business with this gentleman. You will please leave the room.

ALICE. [*Very coldly*] You forget, sir, that I have business with you—that you have already kept me waiting much too long.

CARROLL. [*Amazed*] This tone is very extraordinary.

ALICE. On the contrary, if you will stop to think, you will see it is quite natural. Mr. Kraft, permit me to see you to the door. [*Kraft starts towards door*]

CARROLL. [*Very positively barring Kraft's way*] Stop!

ALICE. [*Very positively*] Mr. Clandenning, either permit Mr. Kraft to pass at once, or I leave not alone this room, but this house forever. [*Carroll turns, astounded. Alice confronts him bravely. Pause, business. Carroll bows and turns upstage. Kraft crosses Jack, back, up C.R.*]

KRAFT. Madame, how can I thank you?

ALICE. Mr. Kraft, it is I who thank you. Go! Hurry! Bring Mademoiselle Stella here at once.

KRAFT. She! To dis house?

ALICE. Yes—I have my plan: he shall choose between us while there is time.

KRAFT. But, madame—take care—dis is dangerous.

ALICE. I know my risks and do not fear to face them. Trust me.

KRAFT. Oh! More dan all de vorlt! [*R., kisses her hand and exit*]

ALICE. [*Crosses to Jack*] Leave us!

JACK. [*As he goes*] She's roused and war's declared. Poor Cal, poor Cal! [*Exit. Alice crosses, looks in glass and arranges hair, dress, etc.*]

CARROLL. [*Comes down and looks on in astonishment*] What are you doing?

ALICE. Wondering if that [*Pointing in glass*] is the same light-hearted, unsuspecting little ignoramus who smiled at me here but yesterday.

CARROLL. What do you mean?

ALICE. Can't you imagine?

CARROLL. No—I cannot. [*Advancing impetuously*] Alice, for heaven's sake! Explain!

ALICE. [*Recoiling from him*] Don't! Please don't!

CARROLL. Don't what?

ALICE. Don't pretend any more.

CARROLL. Pretend!

ALICE. Yes, pretend; I am not deceived, and—oh, I am so tired of it! [*Sits on sofa*]

CARROLL. Are you insane?

ALICE. Not now—I was awhile ago—for then I believed you loved me.

CARROLL. And you think so no longer?

ALICE. How can I?

CARROLL. How can you think otherwise?

ALICE. Ask your own heart.

CARROLL. I do—and it tells me that you were never so dear to me as at this moment.

ALICE. It is time for you to face the truth. [*Carroll crosses, L. She takes bracelet from drawer in desk, puts it behind her back, and advances*] Mr. Clendenning, tonight, for the first time, I put you to the test and the result is a resolve on my part to leave you.

CARROLL. [*Starting*] Leave me?

ALICE. [*Holding out bracelet*] This may enlighten you.

CARROLL. [*Staring at bracelet*] What is that?

ALICE. A bracelet, worth five thousand dollars, designed by you for an actress.

CARROLL. [*Stares at her a moment and then defiantly folds his arms*] Well! Go on! What more?

ALICE. It has taught me two things: first, that Stella is the Latin for star; second, that the business which has so absorbed your time that you could not spare a moment to me was behind the scenes—the bank to which you were so devoted was the dressing room of a theatre.

CARROLL. [*L.*] So—because of a simple attention to a prima donna, who happens to be the fashionable favorite of the hour, a mere meaningless tribute of esteem, you and I must part.

ALICE. [*R.*] If this meant nothing but esteem, why did you conceal your attentions by falsehoods to me?

CARROLL. Because—wives are absurdly jealous. Because I did not care to torment you with suspicions as silly as they are unworthy of your own unsullied heart. [*Advances toward her*]

ALICE. Stop! I beseech you lie no more! Your own lips have betrayed all to me. [*Puts bracelet down on desk*]

CARROLL. When? Where?

ALICE. This very night, in the dressing-room of Mademoiselle Stella, where I went in disguise. Where, concealed, I heard you—Ah! I can say no more! [*Sinks into chair and hides her face*]

CARROLL. Ah! At last I understand. First you spy upon me, then play upon me.

ALICE. I sought to know what I had a right to know—whether you were faithful or false to me. [*Carroll crosses, L.*] When I learned the truth I did not reproach you, I still loved—still hoped to find the nobler side of your nature. Here in this room I saw you anxious to get away from me. Humiliated, heartbroken, I yet strove to save you from what I, in charity, chose to call your madness. I put my pride beneath my feet and tried to reach and touch your heart. I failed—then I told the story of my friend—that friend myself. [*Carroll sinks into chair and hides his face*] I said, he is a man, he has at least a conscience—it shall plead for me; you know the rest. There is but one course left—self-respect commands me to go back to my father's house, a home unsullied by a single touch of vice, where I can find a refuge from infidelity and shame. [*Sits on sofa. Music*]

CARROLL. [*Rising and coming behind her*] You are right—I and my house are utterly unworthy of you, but when you are gone, try to believe that I am not quite so vile as I appear. Remember, that bad as I was, I had not fallen so low as to say one word in my own defense. [*Goes up for hat*]

ALICE. [*Rising*] Where are you going?

CARROLL. Where I need not be ashamed to look my neighbor in the face.
[*Exit*]

ALICE. What does he mean? He is going where he need not be ashamed—ah! I see, with her! No, no! [*Calling*] Carroll! Come back! Come back!

JACK. [*Entering*] What's the matter?

ALICE. Go! Find Carroll! He's gone—out into the street. Bring him back here, to me, this instant.

JACK. But, Alice—

ALICE. Not a word! Find him! Be quick! As you value my happiness, don't lose a moment.

JACK. Not an instant. [*Exit*]

ALICE. Ah! My God! I have fooled with my own heart—driven away my own happiness. Oh! I am ashamed—ashamed, but I cannot help it—I love him! I love him still. [*Enter Kraft, followed by Stella. Kraft, after knocking at door, R., looks round room and perceives Alice. Beckons to Stella, who enters, R.I.E. He points to Alice*]

KRAFT. Stella—you see this poor lady? Well—I have never ask you von favor—I ask it now. I fount you poor, unknown—I made you rich, famous! Help this poor lady! I have explain to you the situation! The dialogue, the acting I leave to you! For dis you vill get no notice—no puffs in the papers—no—but perhaps you will get some recognition [*Pointing up*] up zare. [*Exit, R.I.E.*]

STELLA. Matam—

ALICE. [*Seizing her hand joyfully*] Ah! You are here—you will help me!

STELLA. Vat can I do? Matam, you sall not—[*Lifting her up. Gets L.*] It is I who should kneel. Kraft has told me all. Oh! Forgive me—I did not know zat Anna and you vas de same.

ALICE. And I did not dream that you, my rival, could ever become an angel of mercy to me. [*Restored*]

STELLA. Tell me—vat can I do? I vould die for you.

ALICE. I have sent for him—he is my life—my all. When he comes, I will hide as I did before. Then, you took him from me, but now, you, who do not love him, give him back. Oh! Give him back to me.

STELLA. Yes, matam, I will. He shall hate me and love you.

ALICE. [*Embracing Stella*] Oh! God bless you! Sister—savior!

KRAFT. [*At door*] Take care! Someone is coming.

ALICE. It is he.

STELLA. Quick! [*Pointing behind curtains in window*] Zare! Boze of you, quick! [*Kraft and Alice hide*] Now, if he is not ze vorst puppy in ze world,

she sall hear him despise me. Yes, I vill put myself to shame for her. She is a saint. [*Enter Carroll, with Jack. Business. Carroll motions Jack away; Jack makes exit with a gesture of resignation. Carroll advances*] Ah, he is here! [*She falls into chair at table, and hides her face in her hands*]

CARROLL. I am here. [*Stella rises and turns. Carroll starts with amazement*] Stella!

STELLA. Hush! Take care—somebody may 'ear. You promised to come to me—I waited. Zare vas no time to lose. I haf come for you.

CARROLL. Excuse me—you have made a mistake. I might have flattered you, even followed you in a moment of folly, but I cannot receive you in this house.

STELLA. Vat! You svare you lof, adore me—dat you are retty to ruin yourself for me, and ven at last I lof you and come to you, you are not happy—not glad?

CARROLL. You forget—this is the house of my wife.

STELLA. True! [*Crossing, returning and trying to take his hand*] Let us hurry away, come quickly!

CARROLL. [*Flinging off her hand*] Go! You and I must never meet again.

STELLA. Oh! No! No! You sall not say zat. [*Clings to him*]

CARROLL. It must be so.

STELLA. Nefer, wizout you. You said you lofed me—zat you would follow me—Are you a shentlemans?

CARROLL. [*Starting*] It is not women like you who have the right to rebuke men like me. You who play upon our vanity—our passions—you who invite—tempt us to dishonor, only to rob us.

STELLA. Rob you!

CARROLL. Yes—of our manhood, as well as of our money. [*Advancing on her*] Ah! Now I understand why you are here—[*Rushes to desk, writes check, returns, slaps it into her hand*] There! That's what you came for.

STELLA. [*Looking at check, tearing and crushing it with indignation*] And there's what I do with it—I despise it, and I—[*Sees Alice, who puts out hands appealingly; she checks herself and advances on Carroll, changing tone to one of affected love*] But you—I lof you—you have won my heart.

CARROLL. [*In disgust*] Stand back! This is a farce—mere acting—you have neither heart nor self-respect. My God! To think it is for such women as you we men sell our very souls. Idiots! Imbeciles that we are!

STELLA. [*Music*] You pretended to atore me—but I see you lied—it is your wife you lof.

CARROLL. Stop! Don't let her name cross such lips as yours. Yes—I know now how to honor womanhood like hers. In the presence of vulgar vice, I

learn at last, when it is too late, to prize the angel I have lost—lost because of you. Ah! Out of my house! You shall not pollute the air she breathes! [*Stella stands crushed before him. Tableau*]

ALICE. [*Coming forward, takes Stella's hand and puts her arm about her waist*] Mr. Clandenning, this is my friend—the best friend I ever had—for she has taught me the most precious lessons of my life—charity and forgiveness; charity to those poor playthings of the public who, because men pursue them, are despised by other women; forgiveness for those poor puppets of the clubhouse, who because folly sets the fashion, think it a harmless pastime to forget their own manhood and bring dishonor to our sex.

CARROLL. But—I do not—

ALICE. [*Lifting her hand*] But one word more. This lady consented to humiliate herself in order to prove to me that you were still worthy of respect.

CARROLL. Then this scene here—?

ALICE. Has been a ruse to reinstate you in my esteem. You said to her but now that you honored me—then, for my sake, ask pardon of her.

CARROLL. [*After a pause, crossing*] Mademoiselle, no word can express my shame—my self-contempt—or the gratitude and respect I feel toward you. Can you ever forgive me?

STELLA. Monsieur, I know how you men of ze vorld regard an actress. Tonight I have play ze part ze most difficult and humiliating of my life. But if I have succeed to give you a more noble—a more just opinion of zose vemin who to earn zare bread are at ze mercy of ze vorld, I am more zan repaid. Monsieur, I forgif you wiz all my heart.

[*Momentary curtain*]

CARROLL. [*Seated at table alone*] How the past, crowded with its innocent joys comes back to me. What a contrast to this present with all its horrible and vulgar realities! Alice, once the incarnation of merriment, now bowed down with grief. She who was so proud of me, now despising me! I, who once possessed the priceless treasure of her love, her trust, now bereft even of her respect. [*Rising and walking up and down in agitation*] Ah! I am young, strong, rich—one of the envied few of the world. Bah! What a farce! [*Striking his breast*] Here I am so old, so miserably weak and poor, that even the lowest tramp, if he could see me as I am, would pity or condemn me. Oh! Alice, Alice! Confiding saint and fairy of my home, am I driven forever from your heart? Have I learned only too late to value the holy benedictions of your love? Ah! the thought suffocates me—I am choking with tears, like a silly girl. Air! I must have air—[*Rushes to window, throws it up; snow seen falling outside. As he does so, Alice enters and listens, unseen by him*] There

lies the world with all its will-o'-the-wisp illusions—cold and indifferent—mocking—and there, there goes Stella. Go on, good woman. I was unworthy, even of you—on out of my life, but not out of my heart, for there you have never had a home. Go, and leave me to the humiliation, the hopelessness I so well deserve. [*Stands in window in attitude of despair*]

ALICE. [*Taking up her cloak, steals up behind him, and places it over his shoulders*] Silly boy! You will take cold.

CARROLL. [*Turning with astonishment, and with a sudden gleam of hope*] Alice!

ALICE. Well, sweetheart?

CARROLL. You forgive me?

ALICE. I do more. You have conquered madness—I honor and trust you.

CARROLL. And love me still?

ALICE. With all my heart.

CARROLL. In spite of all?

ALICE. In spite of all!

CURTAIN

•

AN ARRANT KNAVE

A MEDIÆVAL COMEDY

IN FOUR ACTS

(1889)

Copyright, 1928,

by PERCY MACKAYE

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

CAPTAIN CHIQUI,* *an arrant knave*

HUGO, *a soldier*

PAULO, *a hunter*

PHILIPPO, *usurping Duke of Morena*

TORRIANI, *an adventurer*

VICO, *Paulo's stepfather, master woodman*

MARCO, *Chief Justice of the Duchy*

SERGEANT, *of the Duke's Guard*

JACHO, *a woodman*

MARGARITA, *called Rita, Paulo's sister*

LAURA, *Duke's cousin*

LUCA, *Laura's nurse*

CLAUDIA, *Mother Superior of Convent of St. Rosalia*

MARIA, *Vico's servant*

GIRLS, SOLDIERS, PRIESTS, WOODMEN, ETC.

TIME: 1560.

PLACE: AN OLD ITALIAN DUCHY.

ACT I. INTERIOR OF PAULO'S KITCHEN.

ACT II. INTERIOR OF THE CONVENT OF ST. ROSALIA.

ACT III. THE OLD STONE SEAT IN THE WOOD, BESIDE CENCI LAKE.

ACT IV. SAME AS ACT I. NIGHT.

* Pronounced *Cheeky*.

ACT I.

SCENE: *Interior of Paulo's kitchen, 16th century woodman's house. Large old-fashioned bay window, with seat, in corner, L.U.E. Door to forest, in corner, R.U.E. Between these in C. of room an old-fashioned chimney, with fire, crane, etc. At side of chimney, large old-fashioned oven, with large iron door, and step leading up to it. Over fireplace and under mantel shelf, gun and sword are suspended. Through window a clearing in forest is seen. In R.2.E., steps with railing to door into inner apartment. In L.1.E., door to outer shed. Butt of wine under steps, R. Woodpile, L.3.E. Stool near chimney. Table with two chairs, L.C. At rise, Maria discovered directing Jacho and two other Woodmen, who are bringing wood from door in R.U.E., to woodpile.*

MARIA. There, 'tis enough to last the week, Jacho; put the rest i' this outer shed. [*Opens D.L.1.E., and crosses to C.*]

JACHO. [*Going L.*] As you will, Mistress Maria. [*Other Woodmen exeunt, L.1.E. Jacho returns anxiously to L.C.*] Does Master Vico pay to-day?

MARIA. [*Roughly*] Why ask me? I hold not the purse.

JACHO. Pardi! No one holds the purse now, methinks!

MARIA. [*Nervously*] Hush! [*Pointing R.2.E.*] The master is there, he'll hear you.

JACHO. [*In low voice*] What's he at there all day?

MARIA. Making his accounts.

JACHO. His accounts? I wish he'd make mine. How's his humor today?

MARIA. Rougher than ever.

JACHO. That's bad for Mistress Rita.

MARIA. Aye, he's a brute to her.

JACHO. And she his daughter, too.

MARIA. Nay, not his daughter—his dead wife's child.

JACHO. True, by her first husband. Still, she's so gentle and good, I can't think why he's so hard to her.

MARIA. [*Impressively*] I tell thee, Jacho, there's a secret here—and a dark one, too. Hold thy peace, but as I live, I saw him lift his hand to strike her yesternight.

JACHO. [*Indignantly*] I wonder Master Paulo, her brother, bides that.

MARIA. Oh! Master Vico's wary—he shows not his roughness to Rita while her brother's by—and she, poor thing, dare not complain.

JACHO. Why dare not?

MARIA. Master Paulo's hot-tempered; he'd scarce spare his stepfather, an' he knew the truth.

JACHO. He shall know it.

MARIA. What! Would ye make murder here?

JACHO. Aye—rather than have Mistress Rita wronged.

MARIA. [*Excitedly*] I forbid thee, man, to speak. [*Enter Hugo, wood on shoulder, D.R.U.E.*]

JACHO. [*Laughing*] Forbid! Dost thou order me?

MARIA. Aye; thee, or any other varlet—for peace' sake.

HUGO. [*Advancing, R.C.*] Then for peace' sake order me. [*Jacho crosses to L.I.E.*]

MARIA. [*Surprised and gracious, L.C.*] Order you, Master Hugo?

HUGO. Aye—all day, for peace, and a drink. [*Maria crosses to butt, R. Exit Jacho, L.I.E. Hugo throws wood on pile, L. Maria then brings drink from butt to Hugo. They meet, C. Taking cup*] Thanks, lass! [*Drinks*] Ha! That quiets the devil here. [*Returning cup to Maria and going up to chimney*] By Jupiter! Girl, a woodman's trade is a precious hard one.

MARIA. [*Taking cup to shelf under butt, R.*] E'en for a strong soldier like yourself?

HUGO. [*Taking down sword*] E'en so, lass.

MARIA. [*Turning to R.C.*] So you find the axe harder to wield than the sword, Master Hugo?

HUGO. [*Coming down, C.*] Marry! That depends—to handle an axe one needs nothing but arms, but to put a sword to its use, one needs nerves.

MARIA. And a stout heart.

HUGO. Aye, does he, child. [*Kissing his sword*] Dear old sword, may ye soon put my heart to the test. [*Holding out sword*] What think ye of that, Maria?

MARIA. Methinks 'tis beautiful—but better to look at, than feel.

HUGO. In this lies all my hope.

MARIA. In that?

HUGO. Aye, 'tis my sole inheritance—this, and three mystic words.

MARIA. Mystic words! What words are those?

HUGO. Words one speaks not aloud.

MARIA. How then, master?

HUGO. [*Beckoning*] Lend me thine ear, and I'll show thee. [*She puts up ear. He kisses her. She recoils with cry; Paulo enters D.R.U.E.*] Nay, fear not, that's but one, the others are sweeter still; wilt have them?

PAULO. [*Advancing, R.C.*] Nay, another time, you rogue.

MARIA. [*Starting, then pretending to see Jacho, L.*] Stay! Jacho! Not there, not there! [*Exit in confusion, L.1.E.*]

HUGO. Perdition catch thee, Paulo, ye frighten the game away.

PAULO. [*Crossing, L., and hanging gun on wall*] Perdition catch thee for a sad dog.

HUGO. Sad! By the Mass, no! Bad, if you like, but sad—! [*Laughing*] Not while limbs are left for fighting, or lungs for laughing, boy. [*Sits R. of table*]

PAULO. Fight and laugh if ye like, but fie! Don't laugh and break hearts. [*Sits L. of table*]

HUGO. Break hearts?

PAULO. Aye—kisses wound more hearts than swords.

HUGO. Odds down! But I think thou'rt jealous, lad.

PAULO. Jealous? [*Laughing*] Of Maria, Jacho's sweetheart?

HUGO. Nay, I forget the siren beyond the lake; that sweet witch of Eve who woos thee from thy sleep to the moonlit walls of St. Rosalia, and there puts so deep a spell upon thee that thou art made the prey of sweet delusive dreams.

PAULO. No, friend, as night slips unconscious into day, so my dim dream has floated into bright reality.

HUGO. What! Hath she confessed?

PAULO. If kissing be confession.

HUGO. Kissing is the one confession that's sincere. Lovers need not ears, for the lips of love are dumb, disdaining every sense but touch.

PAULO. I cannot waken from the wonder of it, that she, the daughter of some noble house, should grow to loving me, who nothing have but that poor gun, [*Pointing left*] as thou hast nothing but thy sword.

HUGO. Tell me how it happened.

PAULO. 'Twas just one year ago—when autumn made the game hungry, and the hunting good. At early morn I'd followed sport deep into the glade, when, as I neared the high forbidding walls of St. Rosalia, I heard a cry that chilled my blood—a voice, shrieking such terror, that methought the dead had risen, to fright the living to their graves.

HUGO. What didst thou?

PAULO. I flung all from me, save my gun and knife—and, hastening forward, beheld a woman, flying through the wood, pursued by a wild boar. Quick I fired. At the shot, the woman, shrieking, fell, while the boar, mad with pain, rushed raging at its prey. Like a flash, I fell upon the beast, knife in hand. Thrice I sank beneath him, and felt his foaming tusks in my sides; at last I struck my dagger deep into his neck, and saw him tumble, quivering with death, beneath the blow. Then—I fainted.

HUGO. And after?

PAULO. When next I op'd my eyes, a vision fell upon my puzzled sense, so wondrous fair, methought that I had died, and wakened in the angel world. 'Twas then that she first met my gaze, and from that hour my soul was hers to ennoble, or to damn.

HUGO. Was't she you rescued from the boar?

PAULO. Oh, no! 'Twas an old servant from the convent, who had nursed Laura when a babe. This servant, fleeing while I fought, sought help at St. Rosalia, which coming, found me senseless, and the boar dead. They took me quickly to the kitchen, where Laura, hearing how I'd saved her nurse, bent above me, bathing my wounds, and cooling my burning brow with the dew of her gentle eyes.

HUGO. 'Tis not strange ye loved her.

PAULO. Nay, but 'tis a marvel anything so gentle should come to love so rough a brute as I.

HUGO. [*Laughing*] That riddle 's not so hard to solve.

PAULO. Next day I braced my loins and faltered home, weak in body, but so strong in soul I hardly knew myself. I felt all here [*Touching breast*] so changed.

HUGO. But how didst thou contrive to see thy Laura after this?

PAULO. Luca, she I saved, arranged all that, guarding our brief spells of happiness from every spying eye.

HUGO. Aha! I see.

PAULO. [*Rising and crossing, R.C.*] And now, dear comrade, I must win a name that Laura need not blush to bear; and thou must help me.

HUGO. How?

PAULO. Thou'rt a soldier—take me as thy mate—teach me the art of war, and let me strive for glory at thy side.

HUGO. Per Bacco! There's nought I'd like so much, but I know not yet if life or death, shame or glory, are to make me theirs.

PAULO. What mean ye?

HUGO. When but a child I was secretly bestowed in Spain, where I was schooled in arms, and books, by a noble soldier of the king. Six months since, he sent me from Sienna with his blessing, and these words, "In the town of Villa Cenci stands a church, wherein the bones of the Morena lie. On St. Martin's Eve of this same year, while the Angelus doth wake the vale with the solemn sweetness of its chime, repair to the cathedral, to the tomb where Andrea, late Duke of said Morena, lies. There thou wilt find a man and woman waiting thee. If the woman be not false she'll greet thee with these words: At which he whispered in mine ear: "When thou hast heard this

speech," he said, "hand to the man thy sword, and thou'lt learn thy name, and know thy destiny."

PAULO. 'Tis like a tale of antique days.

HUGO. Till that destiny hath been revealed, I can promise nought—e'en to thee.

PAULO. Comrade, tomorrow is St. Martin's Eve. Whate'er betide, give me but thy word that I may share thy fate, however bitter it may be, and I will deem it the best of glory to stand, or fall, for the best of friends.

HUGO. [*Rising, L.C.*] If fate puts power in my hand, I promise only this—to use it for thy triumph with thy love; for I, too, know the tyranny of Cupid, who hath for weeks forced me to lay down the sword and wield the axe.

PAULO. What! Love is thy despot, too?

HUGO. What else? But for the witchery of that magician, thinkest thou I'd linger here, hewing wood and drawing water for thy surly father, Vico?

PAULO. Who is she?

HUGO. A duchess in disguise. 'Tis—[*Enter Vico, R.2.E.*] Peace! Behold! Thy father!

VICO. [*Coming down steps, R.*] Ah, so! Thou'rt here at last, boy! Call thy sister and my woodmen! All, all of them! Dost thou hear?

PAULO. [*Going*] Aye, aye, sir. [*As he goes*] There's trouble brewing! His fit is worse than ever. [*Exit, D.R.F.*]

VICO. [*Back to fire*] Master Hugo!

HUGO. Well, Master Vico?

VICO. How long hast thou been here?

HUGO. By my life! I know not; it seemeth scarce a week.

VICO. 'Tis more than ten.

HUGO. The shortest, and the sweetest, of my life.

VICO. Ah! So ye like to labor, then?

HUGO. No! I mean—yes.

VICO. How much do I owe thee?

HUGO. Faith! Nothing, Master Vico.

VICO. That's more lucky for thee than for me. [*Enter Woodmen with Jacho, D.R.U.E. They cross, down L. Maria enters, L.1.E.*]

HUGO. Lucky! Why?

VICO. Wait, and thou wilt see. [*Looking round, then crossing, down R., impatiently*] Rita! Where's Rita! [*Hugo goes up, R.*]

MARIA. Mistress Rita hath gone to Master Yami's cot.

VICO. [*Angrily*] For what, girl?

MARIA. Yami's wife is ill, her children lacking care while their father is at work.

VICO. [*Furiously*] Someone go for Rita!

HUGO. [*Up R.*] I will. [*About to go, checked by entrance of Rita*]

RITA. [*Entering, D.R.U.E., breathless, with child in her arms*] Here I am, father. [*Comes down, C.*]

VICO. Ah! 'Tis time! What art doing with that child?

RITA. I could not leave it, poor heart, 'twas in sore need of care.

VICO. Send back the brat! There's care at home that thou dost sore neglect. Here! Some of ye, take this child away.

HUGO. [*Up R.C.*] Come, Tulip, come. [*Child jumps into his arms. Paulo enters, R.U.E., and crosses to Rita, R.*]

VICO. [*Crossing, C.*] Attention, all of ye! I've summoned ye to hear bad news. [*Hugo, Paulo and Rita cross, R.*]

ALL. Ah!

VICO. Mistress Rita, how much silk hast thou gathered for the market?

RITA. Alas, sir, the storm hath ruined more than half the harvest.

VICO. And you, woodmen, what have you stored here that I can turn to gold?

HUGO. [*Down R.C.*] A noble pile of trees, master; we've cleared that side of the abyss where the loftiest pines so lately wagged their tops in free defiance of the storm. We've harvested five hundred masts, fit for the grandest ships in Genoa.

VICO. Well, all your labor's lost.

ALL. Lost?

VICO. Aye, lost! Thanks to the perfidy of our noble duke, to the merchants of Genoa.

ALL. Perfidy?

VICO. Aye, perfidy so rank that war hath been declared, and the sale of all this timber hath been stopped. I am ruined, do ye hear? I have nothing, can pay nothing! [*Murmurs*]

PAULO. But, father, I have my gun, I can—

VICO. What! Feed twenty workmen with the game thou find'st upon the lake? Nay, thou must kill more boars, and trap fewer doves, first.

PAULO. [*Aside*] Can he suspect?

VICO. Unless my creditors are merciful, the morrow will see me homeless, and you hungry. Saddle my horse, Jacho! I go to learn the worst. 'Tis life or death for all of us I go to seek. [*Exit Jacho, L.I.E., and Hugo crosses to Paulo, R.*]

RITA. [*Advancing, C.*] Heaven grant, dear father, 'tis a happier life that thou shalt find.

VICO. [*Aside to Rita*] Hypocrite! Hold thy peace! Or speak and save us all. But for thy silence, starvation would not hover like a vulture o'er our heads.

RITA. My silence?

VICO. Aye—the secret thou hast hidden in thy breast is our salvation, and thy tongue shall give it me ere long. [*Rita bows her head, Paulo and Hugo look on in anger. Vico takes hat from chimney and turns to Woodmen*] Now all of you, begone. I shall know the worst by noon—when ye shall hear from me again. [*Woodmen exeunt murmuring, R.U.E. Vico, to Rita, as he goes, L.I.E.*] Remember! [*Paulo makes a sign to Hugo to take child away, then turns quickly to Rita as Hugo makes exit, D.R.U.E.*]

PAULO. [*R.C.*] Rita!

RITA. [*C., starting*] Well, Paulo?

PAULO. What did that Vico say to thee here but now, alone?

RITA. Have I complained?

PAULO. Never, but thou hast suffered. I've surprised thee lately with tears in thy dear eyes, tears that thou hast sought to hide. Rita, the man that dares to bring thee grief shall suffer for't, be he duke—or—Vico.

RITA. [*Looking into his face with a loving smile*] Who can bring me grief so long as I know the joy of such a brother's love as thine?

PAULO. Brave heart! Thou wouldst deceive me. But let him beware! I have seen him frown and thee tremble. Pain in thy face puts madness in my brain!

RITA. Oh, Paulo, peace, you frighten me. [*Great noise heard outside*] What's that? [*Crosses down, R.*]

PAULO. [*Going down to window in L.U.E.*] Woodmen and soldiers hurrying through the woods.

RITA. Soldiers!

PAULO. [*Taking up gun*] Aye, wait here. [*Starts for door, L.I.E.*]

RITA. Nay, I will go with thee.

PAULO. [*At door, sternly*] Nay, I bid thee stay. [*Exit, I.E.L. Hugo enters, D.R.U.E., laughing. Rita crosses quickly to him, C.*]

RITA. Master Hugo!

HUGO. [*Starting, R.C.*] God's life! 'Tis Rita.

RITA. [*C.*] What's the trouble yonder?

HUGO. [*Laughing*] The most comical display of woe I e'er beheld. A lean twig of a man, all clad in armor, as though for court parade—trying to lead a squad of guards through the thickest of the wood; his head bewildered, his

legs entangled, he flounders on—blowing, tripping, swearing—ha, ha, ha!
 'Twas a sight to put a devotee at prayer to laughter.

RITA. There is no danger, then?

HUGO. Not a bit. They'll never catch him.

RITA. Catch whom?

HUGO. The wretch they're hounding—Torriani.

RITA. What! The Count Torriani, that wicked favorite of the duke?

HUGO. The same that was his favorite—until he needed him no longer; then the duke put a price upon his head, which this puffing captain here, hoping to secure, now winds himself to get. [*A figure appears at window*]
 'Tis said the count is hiding in this wood.

RITA. [*In terror*] Near this house, perhaps! [*Figure disappears*]

HUGO. [*Crossing to her, C.*] Fear not, Rita. No man can harm thee while I live. [*Takes her hand*]

RITA. [*Gratefully*] Thank thee, Master Hugo—[*Turns toward him*] more than I—I—[*Checks herself, embarrassed, withdraws hand and crosses to R.*]
 Did you take Tulip back to Yami?

HUGO. [*Crossing, L.C.*] I did. Her father had returned; her mother grown better, even the babe smiled upon me.

RITA. [*With delight*] The babe smiled? How beautiful!

HUGO. I see thou'rt fond of babes.

RITA. Fond? I adore the darlings.

HUGO. [*Musing*] I wish I were a babe.

RITA. [*Laughing*] You, a babe?

HUGO. [*Still musing*] I was once, I suppose; I don't remember.

RITA. What are you saying?

HUGO. [*Coming out of reverie*] Eh? I don't know. Odds life! I think I'm daft! [*Crossing to Rita*] Don't you think I look a little dafty?

RITA. [*With mock seriousness*] Very, Master Hugo. [*Laughs*]

HUGO. Laugh on, sweet sprite. 'Tis fit your merry music should mock my woeful folly.

RITA. [*Puzzled*] Woeful folly?

HUGO. Aye—woeful if not wicked—for I am daft with love, love that I must speak before it is too late.

RITA. [*Startled, turning toward him*] Too late?

HUGO. Haply. Death may make my love forever voiceless.

RITA. [*Terrified*] Death? You are in danger, then?

HUGO. Tomorrow night, St. Martin's Eve, will tell.

RITA. [*Starting and turning away, R.*] St. Martin's Eve?

HUGO. [*Crossing, R.C., to Rita*] When that hath passed, if life and honor still remain, and you permit, I will return.

RITA. [*Crossing, L.C., in agitation*] You leave us, then?

HUGO. Aye, tomorrow morn. [*Rita sinks into chair, R. of table. Going up, C.*] Rita, you see me as I am, and know as much of me as I myself. I am poor and nameless—with nought to boast of but my love for thee. If thou wilt take me as I am, I swear thou'lt make me strong to be, and win, the best—for thy dear sake. Speak, then, gentle heart, and voice the will of God—for He makes men, and what thou sayst now will make, or unmake, me. [*Rita rises and crosses down, L.*] What? No word?—Well, so be it. My life was poor before, 'tis bankrupt from this day. [*Turns sadly up, R.*]

RITA. [*Turning with impulsive fear, L.C.*] No—no—you must not go! [*Embarrassed*] Ah, me! What can I say?

HUGO. [*Coming back to C.*] Nothing—if there be nothing in thy heart for me. And yet again, say nothing, even if thou lov'st me. If that be possible, put out thine hand, then shall I know that I was born to greatness, knowing that I have won it in winning thee. Well? [*Rita pauses a moment, then slowly puts out her hand toward him, at same time turning her face coyly away. Hugo, with cry of joy, crossing quickly to Rita's side, taking her in his arms, and lifting his eyes to Heaven*] Now Heaven, I am thine, and this woman's love the sacred bond that binds me to thy will! [*Shots outside. Rita starts down, R., Hugo crosses to window, L.*]

CHIQUE. [*Outside, R.*] Follow the road! Surround the forest! Beat the bushes! Dead, or alive, bring him to me here! [*Enters, R.U.E., puffing and blowing. Enter Sergeant, following Chiqui, with a crowd of Woodmen behind him. Woodmen dress stage, R. and L.*] A chair—a chair! Hurry, dogs, a chair! [*Hugo advances a chair, R. of table. Chiqui falls into chair breathlessly*] Not for glory, or for gold, would I live this day again! Here, you rogues! Stir—run! Bring me drink! In the duke's name, drink! D'ye hear? [*Rita gets wine at cask, R.*] And listen all to the duke's commands! Death to any who dare give rest or succor to Torriani the traitor! And damned be his days for winding me! [*Rita hands Chiqui wine. Chiqui drinking with avidity, then holding out glass eagerly*] By the Gods, 'tis good—more—more! [*Rita goes to cask for more wine*] Sergeant, you clod! Where are ye? [*Sergeant advances to side of Chiqui*] Here, unbuckle me! I want wind—aye—and wine, too! Give me room, fool, room! [*Sergeant unbuckles Chiqui's belt. With great relief*] Ha! That's right! I'm light again! Now could I drain the Tiber dry, so it were grape juice! [*Rita hands Chiqui more wine. Drinks wine, is about to return cup; stares at Rita in amazement and admiration*]

Am I drunken a'ready, or do I dream? [*Rita puts out her hand for wine cup. Instead of returning cup, he takes Rita's hand, and rises gallantly*] Now though I've lost breath for fifty lives, I bless the day that gives me sight of thee, sweet wench. An' thou'lt kiss me, I'll ne'er curse thy kind again.

HUGO. [*Stepping quickly, C., between Chiqui and Rita*] Nay, an' thou kiss her, someone unkind may curse thee. [*Takes cup from Chiqui, and passes it to Rita. Rita carries cup to shelf, R.*]

CHIQUI. [*Recoiling, L., in surprise, then with affected fierceness*] Ah! How's that, sirrah?

HUGO. [*Touching his sword, and bowing*] At your orders, captain.

CHIQUI. [*With forced appearance of courage*] Who are you, sir?

HUGO. My father's son.

CHIQUI. Thy father's son? [*Eyes Hugo fiercely a moment, slowly smiles, and then explodes with admiration*] On my life, I envy thy dad! For I'll swear thy mother was a beauty! I like thee, lad. [*Crosses to Hugo, C.*] Give me thy fist. The wench is thine. Nature is king—and infancy imperial. I'm still a boy, myself. [*Crossing to Rita, R.C.*] And you, sweet nymph, trust the stars that send thee such a babe as that. [*Pointing at Hugo*] Fear nothing! Unless perchance ye hap to harbor Torriani here, for then a bier, and not a bridal couch, will be thy lot.

HUGO. [*L.C.*] But how is one to know the count? 'Tis said he is wondrous tricky.

CHIQUI. [*R.C.*] 'Fore Gad! I'd give an hundred florins this moment had I news of the wretch now.

PEASANT. [*Advancing down, C.*] Open your purse, captain, for I have the news you want. I've just met the count.

CHIQUI. [*Turning eagerly*] Where, sirrah?

PEASANT. On the other side of the wood, riding madly. When his horse saw me, he shied—and this fell in the road. [*Holding out mantle. Rita and Hugo meet at fireplace and listen with attention, Hugo studying Peasant intently*]

CHIQUI. [*Taking mantle, crossing to table, L.C., finding papers and reading excitedly*] Dispatches to the Count Torriani! By the Mass! 'Twas our man indeed! [*Turning in rage to Peasant*] Why didst not stop him, rogue?

PEASANT. Faith! I stretched my legs to catch him, but his horse was fleet and he wary. As he flew, he flung this to the ground. [*Producing purse*] I stooped to lift it, and when I rose, he'd disappeared.

CHIQUI. [*With angry irritation*] The fiend's escaped, and my promotion's balked again!

PEASANT. I was hurrying back to tell the duke, when I met you, his mighty messenger. As I'm an honest man, I now return this money to the State, for confiscation. [*Holds out purse*]

CHIQUI. [*Takes purse*] Full of gold. [*Puts it in his pocket and turns to crowd*] Not a word of this, you rogues, on your lives! Sergeant, your arm. [*Sergeant comes down, C.*] Let us go, our work is done. The fox hath slipped us. [*Turning upstage, R., leaning on Sergeant's arm*] The duke shall know of this tomorrow. I'll have another night's nap ere I'm damned.

PEASANT. But, captain—

CHIQUI. [*Turning fiercely, R.*] What is't, slave?

PEASANT. The hundred florins—I think I've earned them.

CHIQUI. Earned! Thou beetle! Thou'st earned a halter for not stopping Torriani. Had I not promised these florins, I'd march thee to jail. Count thyself lucky that I keep the gold and spare thy life. [*Going up, R.*] God help us! But the world is wicked, and man foul with lies. Earned indeed! [*To Sergeant*] Help me, lout! My legs are mangled, hunting curs; help me out of this, and flog me green if e'er I seek promotion from the duke again. Earned indeed! Earned! [*Exit, D.R.U.E. All follow Chiqui out, but Hugo and Peasant. Hugo leads Rita to steps, R. She makes exit, R.2.E. Peasant about to follow*]

HUGO. [*Barring Peasant's way*] Stay! One good look before you go.

PEASANT. [*L.C.*] You stare strangely, sir! Do I resemble any friend of yours?

HUGO. No, Count Torriani.

TORR. [*Raising hand quickly to breast*] I, Count Torriani? 'Tis false!

HUGO. Then why touch your dagger? Had not this captain been an ass, tomorrow would have seen his promotion, and your death. I saw your game at once.

TORR. [*Creeping close to Hugo, and drawing dagger*] You've a quick eye.

HUGO. [*Turning just in time to catch his arm*] And a firm hand. [*Flings Torriani off contemptuously*] Had you a sword I'd kill you, but I'll not betray you. You've as much right to live as this usurping duke, monster as you are. But those who harbor you are threatened. You must leave this house. You understand?

TORR. I do. [*Holding out hand*] The life you've spared is yours.

HUGO. [*Looks at his hand, walks to door, R.U.E.*] I'll wait outside. I do not care to know the road you take. I return soon. Have a care to be gone, count. [*Exit, R.U.E.*]

TORR. [*Up R., looking after Hugo*] Go? Where? [*Coming down, R.*] A wall of spies about me! Friendless! Penniless! Outcast! Hunted by the duke

who holds the throne my crimes have given him! No, it shall not be. I'll outwit him yet. Hypocrisy and cunning are mighty forces in this world!

VICO. [*Enters, L.I.E. and falls into chair, L. of table*] All in vain! No mercy and no hope! Driven from my home a beggar!

TORR. [*Aside*] Vico?—and in despair? The very man I want. [*Sits R. of table and taps Vico on shoulder*] So thou art ruined, Master Vico?

VICO. [*Looking up, amazed*] Who are you?

TORR. Torriani.

VICO. [*Starting up and recoiling*] Torriani?

TORR. Aye—here to save thee and make thee rich. If thou wilt take a message to the duke.

VICO. A message from you, my lord! 'Twould be my death.

TORR. Nay, 'twill gild thy life with gold. The duke will restore my rank, and I your fortune, ten times over.

VICO. [*Starting*] Hark! There's someone at the door. This way, quick, this way. [*Crosses to D.L.I.E.*] I will meet you in the forest near the giant rock. If you see man or woman in your path, return and hide in yonder shed, till they are gone.

TORR. [*Crosses to L.I.E.*] Till tonight! [*Exit. Enter Rita, R.2.E. Vico beckons to her. She comes downstage*]

VICO. [*Grasping Rita by arm and drawing her C.*] Look in my face. What dost see?

RITA. Rage, despair.

VICO. Which thou hast written there.

RITA. I do not understand.

VICO. Thou liest! Hidden somewhere in the forest is a treasure that would bring plenty to us all. Thou knowest the place.

RITA. Why say this to me?

VICO. The night thy mother died, she saw thee all alone. I, hidden, heard her tell thee of jewels, riches, precious stones, buried somewhere in the woods—where, I could not hear, she spoke so low.

RITA. The harmless raving of a dying wife.

VICO. Again thou liest! A hundred times thou hast refused to tell this precious secret. Today beggary and ruin are knocking at the door.

RITA. Then let them in. I made a promise to the dead. In spite of any pain thy will can work on me, I will not break my word.

VICO. [*Seizing her by the throat*] By all the fiends! Thou shalt! The treasure, girl, where is it; tell me quickly! [*Rita shrieks, Paulo rushes in, D.R.U.E., flings Vico off. Vico goes up steps, R., sullenly, then turns with intensity to Rita*] Till tomorrow. [*Exit, R.2.E.*]

PAULO. [*Lifting Rita tenderly*] Rita, if thou wouldst save this Vico's bones a beating, tell me what mystery it is that makes the man so fiendish. Come, canst thou not trust thy brother?

RITA. Yes, I must. Another scene like this would drive me to insanity or sin.

PAULO. Speak then; what is't?

RITA. A secret I have carried, like a load of lead, these three years past. Thou'st heard of Duke Andrea?

PAULO. The dead cousin of Philipppo, the despot of our wretched land?

RITA. Aye, a royal man, with five noble sons as successors to his throne.

PAULO. [*Surprised*] Five sons?

RITA. Four of whom most strangely died before the duke himself was killed. The other saved, as my secret will disclose, may now be living, or at peace above.

PAULO. Well?

RITA. Our father was a faithful soldier of Andrea, who, before his death, confided to our father's honor, what I now trust to thee. The duke, believing that the sons he lost were poisoned by some hater of his house, resolved to save the last that lived, and so he sent the child away, unknown to his court, pretending he was dead, and burying with funeral rites an empty coffin in the family tomb.

PAULO. A shrewd device.

RITA. He then sought out here our father—gave him a chest containing precious jewels and the duke's last will, bidding him when fifteen years had passed and St. Martin's Eve had come—

PAULO. [*Starting*] St. Martin's Eve!

RITA. Aye, and while the Angelus did echo through the vale—

PAULO. Aye?

RITA. To repair with a casket to the church.

PAULO. [*Eagerly*] Where he would meet a woman and a youth?

RITA. [*Amazed*] The very words! How didst thou know?

PAULO. No matter, quick. Complete thy tale.

RITA. Our father hid the casket; when dying, told the secret to our mother, who, in turn, dying, whilst thou wert gone, told me all, vowing me to secrecy, and commanding me with dying breath to fulfill the mission entrusted to our father by the duke. The place in which the casket lies, Vico is resolved to know—that he may steal the fortune of the duke.

PAULO. He shall not!

RITA. Tomorrow is St. Martin's Eve, and the fifteen years will be complete. I then intended to unearth the casket and repair to the cathedral, but I cannot, dare not do it now. To you I must confide this holy work.

PAULO. I accept the sacred charge. Where am I to find the casket?

RITA. On the right of St. Rosalia, upon the southern shore of Cenci Lake, a row of pines are growing side by side. At the foot of the third pine, by whichever way you go, is seen a seat of stone. Beneath that seat the casket lies.

PAULO. Tomorrow, ere the sun doth rise, I'll get the casket; and as the Angelus is heard, repair to the cathedral.

RITA. Luca, she whom thou didst save from the boar in the wood, hath sent for me to come unto the convent. Go with me—and on the way to St. Rosalia, I'll show thee the old stone seat.

PAULO. Where we will rest awhile, as I unfold strange thoughts of Hugo thy tale has started in my brain. [*Exit, R.U.E.*]

VICO. [*Appearing, R.2.E. Exultantly*] I've heard it all! [*Coming down and taking gun from chimney*] Tonight I'll disinter the treasure of the dead. [*Exit hastily, D.R.U.E.*]

TORR. [*Entering, L.1.E., cautiously*] Gone! And I have heard that which makes me master of the present duke. Now will I reap sweet revenge, teaching him to tremble when I frown. [*Seeing Paulo's gun, L. Taking gun*] This may be useful. Tonight the casket shall be mine. [*Exit, L.1.E.*]

ACT II.

SCENE: *Interior of the Convent of St. Rosalia. Large old-fashioned bay window with seat in it, overlooking Lake Cenci, C. Alcove with old organ, L.3.E. Curtained archway leading to lower staircase upstage, R.3.E. Oaken doors, R. and L.1.E. Table with chairs, L.C. As curtain rises, Laura discovered at organ. Girls in costume of convent crowded into window in excitement.*

FIRST GIRL. There they are again!

SECOND GIRL. Aye, gliding out of the wood upon the shore.

FIRST GIRL. How splendidly their armor glistens i' the sun!

ALL. Come, Laura, come!

LAURA. For what?

FIRST GIRL. To see this noble crowd of men in armor.

LAURA. [*Rising and coming down, C.*] I have seen one man that makes the sight of others naught to me. [*All laugh*]

FIRST GIRL. And where hast thou seen thy paragon?

LAURA. That's my secret.

ALL. [*Coming down on each side of Laura*] A secret?

SECOND GIRL. Tell it us, Laura.

LAURA. Nay, you would divulge it.

ALL. No, no, never.

LAURA. Well, then, listen. [*All draw near*] Fancy Apollo clad in buckskin, with the eye of Mars, the hand of Hercules, and the heart of Jove himself. A frown that settles on his noble brow as a thundercloud upon the mountain crag, from out of which the flashes of his eye seem like the lightning of the God of storms. A smile like sunshine bursting through the mist, and a voice as musical as the vale when the morn breaks and all the birds waken to fresh joy.

ALL. [*Sighing*] Ah!

LAURA. Such is the man I've seen, aye, e'en touched.

ALL. Where, where?

LAURA. In my dreams. [*Laughs. Girls chase her crying "Cheat! Cheat!"*]

LUCA. [*Entering, R.I.E.*] Hush! Quick, to work! Claudia—the abbess! [*All hasten to work, reading, embroidering, etc.*]

CLAUDIA. [*Entering, R.I.E.*] Very good, children; I'm glad to see ye need not watching. Your sober faith to duty shortens your time of task. You may at once to your games.

ALL. [*Going joyfully, L.*] Thanks, madam, thanks! [*Exeunt, L.I.E.*]

LAURA. [*Aside; going, L.*] Now feel I like a cheat indeed.

CLAUDIA. Laura, stay; I have news for thee. [*Pointing to stool*] Sit near me while I speak. [*Laura sits at Claudia's feet*]

LUCA. [*Sitting, R.*] As I live! She is going to tell her all at last.

CLAUDIA. My child, the hour has come when I am commanded to reveal to thee thy birth and station.

LAURA. Commanded! By whom, madam?

CLAUDIA. By Duke Philipppo of Morena.

LAURA. What right hath he to command regarding me?

CLAUDIA. Hast heard of Duke Andrea?

LAURA. He that was foully murdered i' the wood, by Torriani, to make Philipppo, who now rules, our duke?

CLAUDIA. The same. He was thy father.

LAURA. [*Starting up*] My father?

CLAUDIA. Aye, child! He died three months ere thou wert born; and thy mother, broken by thy father's death, survived thy birth but a few days.

LUCA. [*Advancing*] Leaving thee to me, who had nursed and buried all her noble sons.

LAURA. I, Andrea's child? Then this Duke Philipppo is my cousin?

CLAUDIA. Yes; 'twas he that placed thee in my charge, and now, today, that sent me word to tell thee all—and announce a visit from himself.

LAURA. That man coming here?

CLAUDIA. Yes, alas! To take thee hence.

LAURA. To take me hence? For what?

CLAUDIA. To be his wife.

LAURA. [*In horror*] His wife?

LUCA. The duke is mad! She's nothing but a child.

CLAUDIA. Alas! The duke demands an heir, and so must find a wife. He chooses Laura, because by marrying her he fits the ducal crown more firmly to his head.

LAURA. I'd rather be the lowest peasant's drudge than share that monster's throne.

CLAUDIA. Peace, girl! Such words mean ruin to us all.

LUCA. Leave her to me. I'll teach her heart more patience.

CLAUDIA. Thou'rt right, dear Luca. Thou wert mother to the child, long ere she came here. I'll trust to thee the office of persuasion. [*To Laura, tenderly*] I'll see thee soon again, when wisdom hath taught thee to be brave. [*Exit, L.I.E.*]

LAURA. [*To Luca, in despair*] Oh, nurse, save me! Save me!

LUCA. Save thee? Do I love thee?

LAURA. An' thou dost not, I will die.

LUCA. And so thou shalt—if I love thee not e'en more than I hate that son of Cain who comes to claim thee here today.

LAURA. What are we to do?

LUCA. Thou must speed at once to Marco.

LAURA. Marco? Who is he?

LUCA. Chief of the Senate, and great Justice of our State: a man Philipppo fears, and dare not openly oppose—thy father's dearest friend.

LAURA. And wilt thou take me to him?

LUCA. Nay, thy cousin's spies are everywhere; another must conduct thee.

LAURA. Whom can we trust?

LUCA. Rita.

LAURA. Paulo's sister, whom I've never seen?

LUCA. Aye.

LAURA. Where is she?

LUCA. Here at hand. Ere this tyrant duke hath come, she shall take thee hence disguised. Stay! I'll bring her to thee here.

LAURA. Oh! Quickly!

LUCA. Before thou'st time to think. [*Exit, L.I.E.*]

LAURA. Saved by Rita, Paulo's sister? Ah! That makes salvation far more dear.

LUCA. [*Entering with Rita*] Here is Rita.

RITA. [*Kneeling*] My lady.

LAURA. Nay, nay! Thou shalt not kneel. The Holy Book declares that those who serve should rule. Thou art here to save my life. The rank that service gives should make me kneel to thee. Give me thy hand, and hereafter call me sister. [*Lifts her up*]

RITA. Oh, I dare not.

LAURA. Look in mine eyes—seest thou aught there to fear?

RITA. Nay, everything to love.

LAURA. Then love me without fear, for there is no other love that's true, and so loving; call me sister.

RITA. Oh, madam!

LAURA. Nay, beware; an' thou'lt not call me sister, I'll not accept a sister's service. Thou shalt not save me. Is't so hard to say so soft a word? [*Opening her arms*] See! My heart is hungry for a sister's love.

RITA. [*Embracing her*] Sister!

LAURA. Aye, thy sister so long as I'm a woman, and if I turn a man I'll be thy brother, or thou shalt be my wife. [*All laugh. Trumpet sounds outside. Laura starts*] What's that?

LUCA. [*At window*] Soldiers, and the duke at the convent gate!

LAURA. The duke! Great heaven! All is lost.

LUCA. Nay, thou must, thou shalt escape.

LAURA. But how? See, the duke hath guards at every door.

RITA. Aye, and as I live! There's the captain, who came this morning to my father's house. Ah! I see, I see! Thank mercy, thou art saved.

LAURA and LUCA. Saved!!

RITA. I'll make this gallant promise to escape with me this night; then I'll hasten to thy room, dress thee in my clothes, and when all is dark, he shall fly with thee instead of me.

LAURA. And thou?

RITA. I will receive the duke with the haughty manners of a duchess.

LUCA. And marry him?

RITA. [*Laughing*] If I do, he will repent it.

LUCA. But how, if thou art here, will Laura get to Marco's house?

RITA. My brother 'waits me i' the wood, at the old stone seat beneath the pines.

LAURA. I know the place.

RITA. Go, tell him all. He will guide and defend thee with his life.

LAURA. Aye, thou'rt right.

RITA. Come, then! There's not an instant to be lost; quick, to your room.

[*Exit Laura with Rita, L.1.E. Enter Duke, R.3.E.*]

DUKE. Claudia—the abbess.

LUCA. I will see her, your highness, and say that you are here. [*Going, L.*]

DUKE. And impatient for her presence.

LUCA. I will say so, my lord. [*Exit, L.1.E.*]

DUKE. [*Calling off, R.*] Ho! Without there—Chiqui—Captain Chiqui!

CHIQUE. [*Outside*] Good lord—I fly!

DUKE. [*Crossing to chair, R. of table*] Chiqui is my slave. 'Tis such as he, alone, that I can trust.

CHIQUE. [*Bounding into room, C., and kneeling to Duke*] Behold, 'tis thus the eagle 'lights before the lion.

DUKE. Rise—listen—obey, and give thy counsel. Dost thou know this place?

CHIQUE. [*Rising*] What I know not, sire, would puzzle the devil to discover. This is the cage in which that royal bird, your cousin, hath been kept so long.

DUKE. Aye. Fate grant the bird 's as beautiful as the cage is strong!

CHIQUE. Were she ugly as a hag, my lord, her rank and riches would make her ravishing.

DUKE. She must be my wife before another day hath passed.

CHIQUE. O lucky day that brings a maiden such a knight! Is this business, then, so pressing?

DUKE. The people ferment with a sullen discontent, and certain nobles in my realm make ready to revolt, and openly proclaim some child of Duke Andrea's ruler of this land. Now Lady Laura is of age tomorrow, and my guardianship will end. Besides, she is the only living heir of my dead cousin.

CHIQUE. She lives but little that lives only as a maid.

DUKE. Thou'rt right. Today, as Regent Duke and Guardian, I can force her to this marriage. When once she is my wife, my title as duke is clear.

CHIQUE. Aye, that's certain.

DUKE. I'll mate her this very night—though she were foul as pestilence itself.

CHIQUE. 'Fore Gad, in such a case I'd court the plague myself.

DUKE. [*Rising and crossing, R.*] Now to work. Hast obeyed all my commands?

CHIQUE. Aye, my lord, the guards surround the place. An' a fly escape, I'll put out mine own eyes.

DUKE. What news of Torriani?

CHIQUI. We've got him.

DUKE. You've captured him?

CHIQUI. The better part of him, my lord, his heart.

DUKE. [*Puzzled*] His heart?

CHIQUI. Aye, unless Scripture lieth, for that saith, "Where man's treasure is, there is his heart also." So—[*Producing purse*] Here's Torriani's heart.

DUKE. [*Taking purse, which is empty, and in surprise*] This?

CHIQUI. Aye, that's his purse.

DUKE. There is no treasure here.

CHIQUI. As much as there is heart to Torriani, sire.

DUKE. [*Laughing*] I believe thee, rogue. How didst come by this?

CHIQUI. Aye, marry! That's it—how did I? Faith! By craft and hard pressure. I almost held him when he dropped that, then I as good as confined him.

DUKE. Confined him?

CHIQUI. Put him under wood, my lord.

DUKE. Where?

CHIQUI. Why, here i' the forest.

DUKE. And left him there?

CHIQUI. Aye, faith! For safety.

DUKE. He may escape, sirrah.

CHIQUI. Escape! An' he escape, my lord, I'll ne'er eat chestnuts again. Escape indeed! If any but your highness said that, I'd—I'd—by my bones, I'd—Ha, Ha, laugh, my lord, I'd laugh.

DUKE. An' he does escape, thou'lt never laugh again, for want of breath.

CHIQUI. On my honor, sire, he shall not escape. By heaven! If he does, I'll—I'll—damn me! I'll escape, too.

DUKE. Indeed! And how, sirrah?

CHIQUI. 'Fore Gad! I'll die by mine own hand, with drink and old age.

DUKE. If Torriani be not jailed by tomorrow noon, or if a single soul escape this house tonight, thou shalt die indeed; not by warm drink, but cold steel. Dost understand?

CHIQUI. Understand? When I understand not, sire, make a pattie of me.

DUKE. We will, a veal pattie. [*Crossing, L.*] Go! See my guards well disposed at every door.

CHIQUI. [*Bows. Aside, as he goes up, R.*] Aye! And well dispose myself with drink to die, running. [*Exit, R.3.E.*]

CLAUDIA. [*Entering, R.1.E.*] Pardon my delay, sire, in answering your summons.

DUKE. Mother Claudia, you have here my cousin's only child, whom cares of state have too long forced me to neglect. I come to repair my past forgetfulness by making her my wife. I pray you show us to our resting rooms, and send our lackey with our chests, that we may greet our bride arrayed for marriage.

CLAUDIA. [*Crossing to door in tower, R.*] This way, my lord, your august word is law.

DUKE. Now, if the maid be lovesome, I'm in luck. [*Exit, R.3.E., upstairs. Enter Luca and Rita, L.1.E.*]

RITA. Well, hath he gone?

LUCA. Aye, for awhile; what we have to do must be done quickly.

CHIQUI. [*Outside, R.*] Hi, there! Walk straight, ye rogues.

RITA. Ah! There comes the captain.

CHIQUI. [*Entering, R.3.E., followed by Guards*] Ha, there, ye sons of sin, walk straight, damme! I believe ye're drunk. [*Turns, sees Luca, and eyes her with awe*]

LUCA. [*Haughtily, looking at soldiers*] What are these, sir?

CHIQUI. Heaven save the mark, madam, they're doorposts!

LUCA. [*Indignantly*] Sir! They're soldiers.

CHIQUI. Aye, to post at doors.

LUCA. Here! In this holy house?

CHIQUI. 'Fore Gad! If the house were less holy, there'd be fewer posts here.

LUCA. What mean you, sir?

CHIQUI. That it takes a regiment of these wooden heads to guard the holes in this house. But, Egad we'll do it! Not a soul shall pass these doors tonight, no, nor a body, either!

LUCA. This is infamous!

CHIQUI. Nay, it's diabolic, but when the devil rules, what will ye? Saints must obey. [*To Guards*] Attention, saints, I mean posts! [*He places Guards at the different doors, R. and L.*]

LUCA. [*To Rita, R.C.*] What's to be done now?

RITA. Leave us, and thou'lt see.

LUCA. [*To Chiqui*] Sir, I will take my leave. [*Crossing, L.*]

CHIQUI. [*L.C., barring her passage, C.*] By yer leave—not yet—till I know where this door leads. [*Pointing to L.1.E.*]

LUCA. To our sleeping quarters, sir.

CHIQUI. [*To Guard, L.C.*] Sergeant, attend her saintship and inspect.

LUCA. What, sir, will ye not take my word!

CHIQUI. In love, yes. But in war, sweet holiness, we take nothing but blows. Yet ye need not fear, madam, this thing here is naught but a machine; he'll see nothing—but the holes in the house.

LUCA. [*Crossing, L.I.E., opening door, and pointing out to Guard*] Pass on. [*Comic business. Exit, L.I.E., after Sergeant*]

CHIQUI. [*To Guards at doors, R.I. and U.E.*] Stand within! If but a mouse evades your vigilance, say your prayers! You understand. [*Guards salute and make exit at their respective doors*]

RITA. [*Recoiling, down R., from window with a shriek*] Ah!

CHIQUI. [*Starting, L.C.*] 'Od's life! What's that?

RITA. [*Flinging herself at his feet, C.*] Save me, save me!

CHIQUI. [*Puzzled and frightened*] Save ye—?

RITA. [*Still on knees*] Aye, from that man. [*Pointing out of the window*] He's there, he's coming here. [*Looking up*] Save me!

CHIQUI. [*Amazed and delighted*] By Mars! 'Tis the sweet wench of the wood!

RITA. [*Starting up wildly, staring intensely at Chiqui*] It is, it is!

CHIQUI. The devil it is!

RITA. [*Vehemently*] Aye, you are he, you did it.

CHIQUI. [*Startled and comically impatient*] Did what?

RITA. 'Twas you I saw this morning; you in your shining armor, with your witty smile, your valiant eye, your courtly grace. Ah, sir! Had I not seen you, I'd not be here trembling now.

CHIQUI. How's that?

RITA. [*With enthusiasm*] Today when you left my father's house I fell to praising your princely bearing, and your winsome ways.

CHIQUI. [*With vain smile*] You noticed, then?

RITA. More than I dare confess.

CHIQUI. [*Aside, with great self-satisfaction*] I swear the wench hath brains!

RITA. [*Tenderly plaintive*] Would I had not noted you so much, for when I praised you, my father stormed and said 'twas time for me to marry; aye, and swore I should this very day. I refused; at that we quarreled, and then, alas, he brought me to this prison.

CHIQUI. [*Rubbing hands with delight*] 'Egad! I like him for it.

RITA. [*With distress*] But tomorrow he comes with man and priest, to make me wife, or else shut me here forever as a nun.

CHIQUI. [*With comic resolution*] By my sword! He shall not while I live!

RITA. [*With affected hopefulness*] You will save me—hide me—protect me—fly with me?

CHIQUI. An I don't, put me in petticoats, and make me nurse babes.

RITA. This very night?

CHIQUI. Tonight? Say tomorrow night!

RITA. Tonight, or I die; and thou wilt be my murderer. Tonight, if thou art a man.

CHIQUI. Eh? Dost doubt that?

RITA. Nay, there's too much valor in thy face. I'll warrant thou hast the cunning of the fiend to contrive, and the courage of Cæsar to succeed. [*Giving her hand*] See, I trust thee, and thou'rt too gallant a knight to betray me.

CHIQUI. [*Looking at hand with comic delight*] An I do, damme!

RITA. [*Withdrawing hand*] Then I have thy word—thou'lt save me?

CHIQUI. Thou hast my word, though I can't see how that can save thee.

RITA. As night comes on, evening service will be sung, and we will enter here, each veiled for prayer. Whilst the others are busy with their beads, I'll steal to thee like this, [*Sidles up to him*] and put my hand in thine [*Puts hand coyly in his*], and squeeze it twice. [*Makes two separate and distinct squeezes of his hand, to each of which Chiqui responds with a gasp of pleasure*]

CHIQUI. Um—um! An' thou dost, I'm done for. I could refuse thee nothing.

RITA. At the second squeeze—

CHIQUI. [*Eagerly*] Make it three.

RITA. I will if thou'lt make me a promise.

CHIQUI. [*Recklessly*] 'Fore Gad! I promise anything—except to keep my promise.

RITA. If thou dost not, I am lost.

CHIQUI. So thou'rt not lost to me, I'll risk it.

RITA. Well, then, at the signal, thou'lt pass me by thy guards beyond the convent walls. At the old well, in the woods, I will await thee, and whilst all eyes and ears are dulled by sleep, thou'lt bear me far away from a father's rage and a nun's despair.

CHIQUI. [*Gallantly*] Thou hast won my heart. [*With comic courage*] Prestissimo! I'll risk my head.

RITA. [*Enthusiastically*] Ah! Now I know thou art the very god of heroes!

CHIQUI. [*With conviction*] Damme if I'm not! King—peasant—priest—succumb to passion—enchantress of the world. To its seductive sway [*Kneeling*] e'en I must bend the knee. The fear I bear the duke turns to valor at the touch of love! Had I a thousand heads, I'd stake them all for thee. [*Kisses her hand. Enter Sergeant, L.I.E.*]

RITA. [*Starting upstage, L.*] Heavens! The guard!

CHIQUI. [*Still on knees, C., pretends to hunt for something on the ground, going down on hands as well as knees*] Sergeant!

SERGEANT. Aye, captain.

CHIQUI. Look for it, lout! Look for it.

SERGEANT. For what, captain?

CHIQUI. [*Furiously*] What matter so ye find it? See! There! Yonder! [*Points behind Sergeant. Sergeant turns back. Chiqui rises quickly and crosses*] Well, fool, what hast found? [*Rita comes down, R.*]

SERGEANT. Nothing.

CHIQUI. That's more than ye deserve. [*Looking at Rita, then winking at Sergeant*] Unless I can trust thee, rogue.

SERGEANT. Ye may, with anything but wine.

CHIQUI. [*Nudging Sergeant*] E'en with a woman?

SERGEANT. With her most surely, for I fear a woman, and so respect her.

CHIQUI. Egad! I see e'en fear may be a virtue. I will trust thee. And with a woman, too, whom thou in secrecy must safely see to the freedom of the wood, and then instantly return! Instantly—dost understand? Instantly!

SERGEANT. I'll return, though she were thrice a woman, and I but one third a man.

CHIQUI. Peace, and stand aside. [*Points, R. Sergeant crosses to R. To Rita, aside*] Well, sweet mistress, thou hast heard.

RITA. [*With affected awe*] Aye, and wondered at thy wit.

CHIQUI. I don't wonder that ye did. When thou'rt ready [*With extravagant gallantry, and bows*] thou'lt find valor thy slave, and fidelity thy knight.

RITA. [*Crossing to L.I.E.*] Then, though a mob of dukes barred the way, thy wit and courage would deliver me.

CHIQUI. Marry! So they would.

RITA. But time flies, and so must I.

CHIQUI. Stay! Canst thou not feed my courage with a kiss?

RITA. [*At door, L.*] When thou hast won it; at the well I will requite thee. [*Curtsies*]

CHIQUI. [*Bowing low*] 'Tis well I win it so. [*Exit Rita, L.I.E.*]

DUKE. [*Entering, R.U.E.*] Captain! [*Coming down, R.C.*]

CHIQUI. [*Turning with a start, L.C.*] My lord!

DUKE. What art doing?

CHIQUI. [*Bows*] Bowing, sire—bowing.

DUKE. To whom?

CHIQUI. To whom I know not, but faith, I know to what.

DUKE. Well, sir?

CHIQUI. 'Twas to Heaven—[*Kissing hand*] that is—a woman.

DUKE. [*Severely*] Fooling with a woman when on guard?

CHIQUI. 'Tis the only time to fool with women, sire.

DUKE. When?

CHIQUI. When on guard.

DUKE. Take care no woman fools with thee.

CHIQUI. Fool with me! Ha, ha! You're ticklesome, my lord! Let them fool with fools who are vain and witless, sire; as for myself, no wench shall fool with me, who grows not a beard, and speaks not basely.

DUKE. [*Turning, R. Noticing Sergeant*] What's this?

CHIQUI. My sergeant, sire. A precious fine ass, but a capital good guard.

DUKE. How can that be?

CHIQUI. Crosswisely, my lord. A guard's duty is to stand and bear arms; now an ass is wondrous fine flesh to bear anything, so you let it stand.

DUKE. [*Crossing to table, L., laughing*] By my crown! Thine emptiness is as full of humor as a wineless cask of gas.

CHIQUI. [*To Sergeant, pointing R.U.E.*] Ass! [*Sergeant salutes*] Bear arms without! [*Sergeant salutes again, and exit, R.U.E.*]

DUKE. Captain Chiqui, if thou'rt as loyal as thou'rt laughsome, thou'lt carry thy head safely to thy grave.

CHIQUI. [*R.C.*] Loyal! Aye, am I! In war to victory, and in love to anything that bears a pretty face and wears a petticoat.

DUKE. Enough. Is the convent well watched?

CHIQUI. There's not a hole a rat could run through that I've not plugged with a guard.

DUKE. Then none can escape, unless thou art false.

CHIQUI. An' I be false, sire, let me ne'er kiss woman again. [*Enter Claudia, L.I.E.*]

DUKE. [*L.C.*] Ah, madam, is my cousin ready to greet me?

CLAUDIA. She is coming with her sisters for the vesper song. I pray you let that end ere you meet her.

DUKE. So be it. [*Claudia bows and crosses, up L., to organ. Duke to Captain*] Captain, stand without.

CHIQUI. [*Not moving*] Aye, sire, without anything, so I have legs and good fodder.

DUKE. Stand without the door.

CHIQUI. [*Still immovable*] Easily, while there's a floor.

DUKE. [*Angrily*] Wilt go, sirrah!

CHIQUI. [*Starting quickly up right*] An I don't, damme!

DUKE. [*Sternly*] And, captain.

CHIQUI. [*Turning humbly*] Yes, sire.

DUKE. Remember! No one must leave this house tonight.

CHIQUI. Though the house were a forest, and the time spring, not e'en a tree should leave. [*Salutes and exit, R.U.E. Duke goes upstage, sits in window. Claudia plays organ. Maidens enter veiled, surround her and sing. One of them steals from group as Chiqui steals in, R.U.E., followed by Sergeant. Chiqui is about to kiss her hand as song ends, when Duke discovers him*]

DUKE. [*Severely*] Captain!

CHIQUI. [*Starting*] My lord! [*Exit Laura with Sergeant, R.U.E.*]

DUKE. [*L.C., at table*] What art doing here?

CHIQUI. [*Fooling nervously with belt*] Doing, my lord? Faith, I'm not doing, sire, I'm undoing.

DUKE. Undoing what, sir?

CHIQUI. [*Unbuckling his belt*] My belt, your highness.

DUKE. I told you to stand without.

CHIQUI. [*Going, R.U.E.*] And so I will, my lord. Egad, I will!

DUKE. Stay! See the priest we brought with us, and tell him to make ready.

CHIQUI. Aye, my lord. [*Aside*] Saints! When the devil calls a priest, let innocence beware! [*Exit, R.U.E.*]

DUKE. [*Rising, to Claudia*] Now, madam, present my cousin.

CLAUDIA. [*L., bows, then calls*] Laura, advance. [*Rita, veiled, advances C.*] Children, the rest of ye may go. [*All go, L.I.E. Claudia turns to Rita*] Laura, this is thy cousin Philipppo. [*Rita curtsies, Duke bows*] I have told thee of his coming, and the motive that hath brought his highness here. Thou knowest thy duty; and you, sire, I pray Heaven you will know how to win her to gladly do your will.

DUKE. I shall, my good mother. Leave us and send lights. [*Claudia bows and exit, L.I.E. Duke turns to Rita*] Wilt thou not take my hand, dear cousin? [*Rita places her hand in his*] Good! Now thou hast taken my hand, I hope thou'lt find it easy to give me thine forever. What! Art silent, coz? Now, by the Mass! I like thee for't! A silent woman makes the best of wives. What ho, there! Lights! [*Servants enter, L.I.E., with lights, place them on table, and exeunt, L.I.E.*] Now lift thy veil that I may see thy face. [*Rita lifts veil*] By all the gods! Thou'rt beautiful.

RITA. [*Curtsyng*] You flatter me, my lord.

DUKE. She hath a tongue, but the sweetness of her voice makes its waking e'en more grateful than its sleep. By Venus! Our mating is most proper, coz, for thou hast beauty, and I power; give me thy beauty, and I'll give thee my power—a most fair exchange.

RITA. If I be beautiful, my lord, then have I the power of beauty, power enough for me.

DUKE. Grant me the power of thy beauty, and I'll teach thee the beauty of my power.

RITA. The beauty of power lies in power's noble use.

DUKE. What nobler use of power than wedding thee?

RITA. Use it to win me first.

DUKE. How shall I begin?

RITA. With my heart; win that, and I will follow it.

DUKE. Time is pressing, and the shortest way to win a woman's heart is to teach it fear.

RITA. The heart that can be taught that lesson is not worth the winning.

DUKE. Thou'rt wrong, sweet coz. In woman a fearsome heart is good, so long as the face be fair.

RITA. No false face can be fair, and that face is false and therefore most unfair, that hides so foul a thing as fear.

DUKE. Tush, child! Thy face is fair, and shall be false, by fairly hiding fear, unless thou wilt consent to wed me.

RITA. Consent? Aye, will I! Better consent than fear.

DUKE. This very night?

RITA. Nay, my lord, give me time; you take my breath away.

DUKE. Better lose thy breath by marriage, than by death, dear coz.

RITA. Why should you—a knight—care to wed by force what it were so much more noble to freely win.

DUKE. My rank is noble. As my bride, that rank shall ennoble thee.

RITA. If I wed thee from fear, the only rank that marriage could bestow would be the rank corruption of a coward heart.

DUKE. Enough of fooling with fine phrases; the priest is close at hand; thou must marry me this night, aye, within an hour.

RITA. [*Starting down, L., and looking about*] Within an hour?

DUKE. Nay, this instant, I like not the look upon thy face; thou wouldst escape. [*Calling up, R.*] What ho! Captain!

RITA. What are you going to do?

DUKE. Put thee under guard while I go to bring the priest, summon Mother Claudia, and marry thee at once.

RITA. [*Aside*] Great heavens! I am trapped!

DUKE. What ho! Captain, I say!

CHIQUI. [*Entering, R.U.E.*] Here, my lord.

DUKE. Dost see this lady? [*Rita turns her back*]

CHIQUI. [*Coming down, R.*] Aye, my lord.

DUKE. Guard her here till I return.

CHIQUI. An' she escape, she'll have more mind than I have muscles, sire.

DUKE. An' she does, we'll make dog's meat of thy muscles. [*Exit, R.U.E.*]

CHIQUI. Phew! Were I not sure of my own wit, this devilish duke would make me wish my mother had died a maid.

RITA. [*Putting down her veil, and advancing, C.*] My lord.

CHIQUI. [*R.C.*] Eh!

RITA. Have you a heart?

CHIQUI. No, I lost it an hour ago.

RITA. How, my lord?

CHIQUI. By listening—to a woman.

RITA. What sort of woman?

CHIQUI. One I'd die for—so she were mine to live with.

RITA. What if another sought to make her his against her will?

CHIQUI. By all the gods! [*Touching sword*] This should teach him that love was more mighty than the duke himself.

RITA. [*Lifting veil*] I'll put thee to the test.

CHIQUI. [*Recoiling amazed*] Great Cæsar! 'Tis my siren!

RITA. The duke hath resolved to force me into marriage.

CHIQUI. [*Falling in chair*] Oh, Lord! Fate is a fool, and I'm his bauble.

RITA. I'll die ere I'll be his, and thou must save me.

CHIQUI. Must I? [*Striking breast*] Here's a must that makes me mutton-hearted. If I save thee, I die. If I die, wherein does saving thee make thee more surely mine? The claims a corpse has, no woman cares for.

RITA. [*Crossing to him, angrily*] Must I die then?

CHIQUI. [*Springing up and crossing, L.*] No, be a duchess! I shall not love thee less.

RITA. Now I see thou art a coward.

CHIQUI. Coward? 'Sblood! 'Tis a hard word, but not so hard as death to one who hates not life.

RITA. Is't true indeed, thou art a craven?

CHIQUI. Alas, what will ye?

RITA. I will to do a miracle. Make e'en of such a twig as thee, a man.

CHIQUI. An' thou dost, thou'rt greater than my mother.

RITA. I'll do't. By so frightening thy fear that it will fly, and leave thee brave.

CHIQUI. [*With a swagger*] Damme! No woman yet hath frightened me!

RITA. Then thou shalt quail at last. If I marry this duke, I'll be a duchess.

CHIQUI. Well?

RITA. And as a duchess have power to reward.

CHIQUI. Aye.

RITA. Well, if thou leav'st me here to marry, the first deed I'll do as duchess will be to reward thee with a halter, hang thee high as Haman!

CHIQUI. [*Starting in terror*] Hang me?

RITA. Aye, save me now, and if need be, die a soldier's death, or leave me here, and die a dog's death on the gallows.

CHIQUI. Santa Maria! Ye make me wet with weakness! What e'er betides, I'm lost. [*Sinks into chair near table, L.*]

RITA. Not if we escape.

CHIQUI. Escape! How?

RITA. By these doors.

CHIQUI. The duke's below, he'll see us.

RITA. By that window.

CHIQUI. Nay, there's nothing but the lake below, an' drowning's only fit for useless cats.

RITA. Then we must risk it by the tower, and trust to thy sharp sword.

CHIQUI. 'Tis duller than mine own fear-ridden wits.

RITA. Tush! Take heart. [*Crosses to his side, kneels and puts arms out to him*] Think how I love thee—draw, and be my hero!

CHIQUI. [*With sudden resolution*] Aye, and so I will. [*Rising and crossing, R.*]

RITA. [*Rising triumphantly*] Ah! The miracle's performed.

CHIQUI. It is; I laugh at fear, [*Drawing sword*] defying all the world. Come on! [*They start for door, R.U.E. Duke appears with priest, R.U.E. Chiqui recoils, down R. Rita crosses, L. Claudia enters, L.I.E.*]

DUKE. [*Coming down, C.*] What means this? Why dost draw thy sword?

CHIQUI. Yes, my lord. That's it, why did I?

DUKE. What mumbling foolery is this?

CHIQUI. Well, you see, my lord, I thought I heard a noise, and drew to save this lady—from offense.

DUKE. We come not to offend, but to marry.

RITA. That's the worst offense, my lord, a man can do a woman, who wishes still to be a maid.

CLAUDIA. [*Aside, in amazement, looking at Rita*] Who is this?

DUKE. [*R.C.*] Good cousin, the time has passed for pleasantries. The priest is here to make of thee a duchess, and give us both the benediction of the Church.

RITA. [*L.C.*] My lord, I love thee too little, and the Church too much, to let it bless that which is, of all things, most accursed.

DUKE. And what is that?

RITA. A marriage without love.

DUKE. I am thy guardian, and the duke. Nature and the law command obedience. To deny me that is treason, which means death. So answer at thy peril. Wilt thou marry me?

RITA. Nay, answer me. Wilt thou marry me?

DUKE. Aye, as fast as this good priest can make us one.

RITA. You swear it?

DUKE. I swear it.

RITA. [*Crossing up, C.*] You all have heard the duke. Now hear me. [*Turning to Duke*] And let us learn the value of your vows, my lord. I accept your offer—I—Margarita—the master woodman's child.

DUKE. [*Astounded*] Margarita? Then thou'rt not my cousin?

RITA. I am not.

DUKE. [*Crossing furiously, L., to Claudia*] What means this, madam?

CLAUDIA. [*In great agitation*] My lord, I'm dumb with fear.

DUKE. [*In rage*] Where is my cousin?

LUCA. [*Entering, R.I.A., and advancing*] At great Marco's house!

DUKE. So—there's treason here! [*Turning to Chiqui and pointing at Rita*] Captain—quick! Arrest this woman, and drag her to the deepest dungeon of the town. [*Chiqui motions Guards to seize Rita. Duke to Rita, furiously*] By heavens, girl, the rack shall be thy bridal couch, and death thy groom.

RITA. [*In clutches of Guards*] Better both—than marriage with a perjured tyrant like thyself.

DUKE. Away with her at once! [*Crosses to Claudia, indignantly*]

CHIQUI. [*To Guards*] Away with her, ye slaves! [*Guards drag Rita off, R.U.E.*]

LUCA. [*To Chiqui, angrily*] Traitor!

CHIQUI. [*Aside to Luca*] Peace, wench! The fox shall fool the lion! I'll save her yet—or die an arrant knave! [*Rushes off, R.U.E.*]

ACT III.

SCENE: *The old stone seat in the wood, at the foot of an old pine, C., on each side of which are three pines. In background, Cenci Lake is seen, and the Convent of St. Rosalia in the distance. Time, twilight. Paulo discovered alone, listening to the vesper service of the Convent heard in the distance.*

PAULO. [*As singing ceases*] 'Tis the vesper service of the sisters of St. Rosalia. As they voice their adoration of the saints, Laura, praying, wafts to Heaven the holy incense of her maiden's heart. [*Lifting his hands*] My vows

ascend with hers, blending in the sense of Heaven the perfume of our spotless loves. To Laura, and to honor, I dedicate forever each sinew of my body, and all the forces of my soul. [*Comes down and looks off anxiously*] Night comes swiftly on, and Rita tarries still. 'Tis very strange! I've lingered here three hours, and yet she promised to hasten back and help me disinter the casket of the dead.

LAURA. [*Running in, L2.E.*] Paulo!

PAULO. [*Amazed, C.*] Thou here alone, Laura—at this hour? What marvel's this?

LAURA. [*Excitedly*] Stay not to question, but lead me with all the haste of terror to Marco, the master of our Senate.

PAULO. But, Laura—

LAURA. Nay, speak not, but fly with me at once! Ruin, death, may e'en now with treacherous speed be started on our track!

PAULO. Thou art in peril, then?

LAURA. Yes, I, and others a thousand times more dear.

PAULO. Then, come—no harm shall reach thee while I breathe. [*They start off, R. Suddenly Paulo stops*] My vow, my vow! [*Crosses, L.C.*]

LAURA. [*R.C.*] What vow?

PAULO. The vow I gave the dead this day to do a work which, left undone, undoes the life and fortune of Andrea's son.

LAURA. What! Andrea hath a son alive?

PAULO. Aye, he lives, for I have seen him.

LAURA. When! Where?

PAULO. This very day, beneath my father's roof.

LAURA. Merciful Heaven!

PAULO. Tomorrow at the hour of the Angelus he repairs to the cathedral, there to learn his name and rights. The papers that prove him lawful duke lie buried in the earth.

LAURA. Where?

PAULO. That I dare not tell. [*Laura turns in surprise*] Nay, not e'en to thee, for I have pledged my soul to secrecy. This very night I must secure these proofs. If I go now with thee, Andrea's son may be forever lost. My will stands palsied 'twixt my plighted honor and my love for thee.

LAURA. Lose not an instant! In saving dear Andrea's son, thou art saving mine own brother.

PAULO. [*Recoiling*] Thy brother?

LAURA. Aye, but an hour ago I learned that Duke Andrea was my father.

PAULO. [*Overwhelmed*] Thou art a duchess, then?

LAURA. Alas! That's why this treacherous duke hath sought this very day to force me into marriage.

PAULO. What! He dared to hope his victim's child would be his wife?

LAURA. Aye, e'en now he's at the convent believing he will wed me. I have escaped, thanks to thy brave sister, who hath saved me at her peril.

PAULO. Rita in danger, whilst I waste time in words? My boat is waiting, we'll take the shortest cut to Marco's house, then I'll hasten back, unearth the papers of the dead, and fly to the rescue of my sister. [*Crosses to R.3.E.*] Come, let us be gone, my lady. [*Bows reverently*]

LAURA. My lady! These words to me?

PAULO. Aye, lady, you are my lawful ruler's sister.

LAURA. But still, dear heart, your love.

PAULO. Nay, nay! Not yet. If e'er I win a rank you need not stoop to share, I'll lay it, with my deathless love, at your dear feet. Till then, I'm but your willing slave, and you my sovereign lady.

LAURA. So be it! Lead on, I'll follow, trusting all to thy undaunted will. [*Exit Paulo, R.U.E., followed by Laura. After a slight pause, enter Chiqui, L.2.E., with shaven face, drawn sword, and terrified manner. He looks about in fear, and starts at every fancied sound*]

CHIQUI. Oh, Mars! And hath it come to this, that every worm that crawls or bee that buzzes, turns me, a seeming lion, to a timid hare! And all for Venus! Oh! Miracle of love, that makes e'en cowards brave! For Rita have I risked the gallows, which, God knows, I'd rather die than face. I've set her free for love, and bound myself a slave to quaking fear. [*Starting*] Ha! What's that? Nothing! Philosophy declares that nothing comes of nothing, which proves philosophy a fool; for there hath come to me this night a universe of horrors, and all—from nothing. [*Peers timidly around*] The way seems clear. [*Drawing himself up*] Damme! I must play the brave in spite [*Striking breast*] of palpitating terror here. [*Turning, beckons, off L.2.E. Enter Rita and Luca, arm in arm. Luca carries a bundle of clothing. To Rita*] Come on and fear not, I am with thee still. [*Crossing down, R., and looking around*] Is not this the place?

RITA. [*L.C.*] Aye, valiant knight. [*Luca, down L.*]

CHIQUI. I've brought thee safely here, daring the worst of deaths to give thee life. I've e'en parted with my beard, asking nothing but thy love.

RITA. [*Giving hand*] Which thou hast surely won, as I will prove ere time hath made thee older by a day. [*Taking a bundle from Luca and handing it to him*] First take this. [*Crosses to C.*]

CHIQUI. What's that?

RITA. A disguise so perfect that thy dearest friend could not detect thy grace.

CHIQUI. A disguise?

LUCA. Aye, man! One that will not only change thy every look, but e'en conceal thy sex.

CHIQUI. [*Amazed*] Conceal my sex! 'Odds down! What sorcery is here?

RITA. The magic of a woman's dress.

CHIQUI. [*Dropping bundle*] Petticoats! And for me?

RITA. 'Tis the only way to safely hide thy valor, which naught can mask but the skirts of timid woman. Once thy courage is concealed thou canst out-face the duke himself, for then the quality that marks thy manhood most will not be seen.

CHIQUI. Damme! But that's true! And yet, methinks—

RITA. [*Coaxingly*] I prithee, don these for my sake. [*Puts hand in his*]

CHIQUI. An' thou sing that song I'm damned! [*Rita points at bundle with a look of tender appeal*] Nay, now, look not so, or I will melt. Phew! I'll don these here at once.

RITA. Nay, nay, not here!

LUCA. Fie! For shame, man! Seek some thicket i' the wood, and whilst we wait here for her brother, thou canst unsex thyself in those.

CHIQUI. Aye, and so I can. [*Going*] Ha, ha! Love, though blind, hath wit enough to cheat the devil. Now to be a wench—aye, a sweet, insinuating, man-killing little wench. [*Exit, R.2.E.*]

LUCA. Now this quaking war horse hath left us for awhile, I can question thee again.

RITA. Then sit we here and rest till his return. [*They sit on stone seat*]

LUCA. His name, thou sayst, is—?

RITA. Hugo.

LUCA. Hugo—aye, that's right. What sort of a person hath he?

RITA. An eagle's eye, an angel's smile, a lion's tread. A sky-clear honesty upon his face, through which shines out a soul that doth at once both win, and awe. In short, nature hath stamped upon his person those seals of kindness, courage, truth, with which she marks the metal of imperial men.

LUCA. And 'tis tomorrow eve he goes to visit Duke Andrea's tomb, to learn his father's name and know his destiny?

RITA. Such was the tale he told my brother.

LUCA. Aye, he is, he must be good Andrea's son, our true duke and our sovereign. [*Rita rises, crosses, R., and sighs deeply*] Hoity—toity, child, why that heavy sigh?

RITA. I know not. My heart is heavy; would my brother had returned!

LUCA. An' thy brother come not soon we'll have to make our way to Marco's house as best we can, with this vain bubble of a man we call the captain.

RITA. Nay, thou shalt not call him names, to whom we owe our lives!

LUCA. Thou'rt right, beshrew me for a thankless jade. But time's agog, and the duke may smell out our escape at any moment.

RITA. If my brother doth not soon return, 'twere best for us to seek out Master Hugo, and trust to his wise courage to bring us safely to great Marco's care.

LUCA. By my soul, we will! I long to set my eyes on this young prince, and though this windy captain's heart be true, I do not trust his head.

RITA. Hush! Behold, he comes. [*Luca looks and bursts into a laugh*] Nay, nay! An' thou laugh we are lost.

LUCA. God-a-mercy! Then we're doomed! Ha, ha, ha! An' I laugh not, I die—ha, ha, ha!

RITA. [*Laughing*] Heaven help us! Ha, ha, ha! This sight would make a hangman laugh! Ha, ha, ha! [*Enter Chiqui, R.2.E., in woman's clothes, awkward and forlorn. As they laugh, he stares in disgust*]

CHIQUI. [*R.C., angrily*] What art laughing at? [*They try to speak, then laugh again*] Nay, then, an' ye make game of me, ye'll find I'm no fowl—though its foul play in you to treat me thus.

RITA. [*C.*] But, hear me, captain dear—[*Laughs again*]

CHIQUI. S'death! But I've heard thee enough! [*Going, R.*] I'll end this clownish masquerade at once.

RITA. Nay, nay! Thou dost not understand—

CHIQUI. [*Coming back, angrily*] Aye, but I do. No wench shall play skittles wi' me. I'll eat thistles first. So! This is my reward for saving thee from rack and tears—that thou laughst at me! Nay, then, thou shalt face the duke, and laugh at him. [*Starts off, R.*]

RITA. [*Quickly*] Art thou a man?

CHIQUI. An' you doubt it, look at my legs. [*Lifts his petticoat and shows his boots. Rita turns off, L., with a scream*]

LUCA. [*Crossing, C.*] Fie! For shame, Martha!

CHIQUI. [*Turning fiercely*] Whom call'st thou Martha?

LUCA. Why, thee, dear heart. For that must be thy name until thy noble wit hath brought salvation to us all.

CHIQUI. Salvation to the dogs, I'll none on it! Better death than loss o' dignity. [*Furiously. Luca and Rita laugh again*] This laughter shall undo ye. [*To R.1.E.*]

RITA. [*Crossing quickly, C.*] But, God-a-mercy, friend, we laugh not at thee.

CHIQUI. [*Turning*] Whom, then?

RITA. At thine enemies.

CHIQUI. [*Puzzled, then crossing to Rita*] Thou'rt laughing at mine enemies? [*Rita nods in suppressed laughter. Dumbfounded*] God-a-mercy! How is that?

RITA. To think how easily in that attire thou'lt lead them by the nose—and make e'en the duke himself conduct thee safely out o' danger.

CHIQUI. [*Suspiciously*] Thou'rt fooling me again.

RITA. [*With affected amazement*] Fooling thee! Nay, then, if I or any other tried fooling thee, we'd soon find ourselves the fools of our own folly.

CHIQUI. [*With conviction*] There thou say'st true.

LUCA. But still we cannot help but laugh when we look at thee. [*Chiqui turns angrily. Luca quickly*] and think how easily thou'lt make fools of all thy foes, by simply draping thy fine manly limbs in petticoats! Ha, ha, ha!

CHIQUI. Aye, that is ticklesome. [*Laughing*] Ha, ha! I can laugh at that myself. Ha, ha, ha! [*They all laugh together. Trumpet heard in distance. They all stop laughing*]

LUCA. [*Startled, down L.*] What's that?

CHIQUI. [*Crossing, R.C.*] An alarm call of the guards. By woe and woman! Look, look yonder!

RITA. Aye, see! At the convent gate, the duke's soldiers, all astir with torches.

LUCA. They've discovered our escape.

RITA. And have started to pursue us.

CHIQUI. Jupiter! I'm lost! A sacrifice to Venus!

RITA. Nay, thou shalt laugh at them, this very night. [*Crosses, R.*]

CHIQUI. [*C.*] What? Laugh at my own hanging?

RITA. Who talks of hanging? Do as I bid thee, and we've naught to fear.

CHIQUI. Command, then, for I'm wax.

RITA. Luca and I will steal quickly to my father's house, where we will don disguises and meet thee at the giant rock. Till then, brave champion, thou must stop behind and face these guards.

CHIQUI. To be taken by the duke?

RITA. Nay, but to misdirect the wretch.

CHIQUI. Nay, nay! My neck's at stake. Not all the wit o' this, [*Touching head*] but all the strength o' these, [*Showing legs*] is what I need to save me now. I'll off wi' these vile skirts that I may run. [*Crosses, R.*]

RITA. [*C., in terror*] An' thou dost, we're lost indeed.

LUCA. [*L.C.*] Aye, lost past saving by the saints themselves.

CHIQUI. [*R.C.*] But, damme! I—

RITA. [*Stealing caressingly to him*] If thou lov'st thyself as well as I do love thee, then for my sake thou wilt bravely face the duke in this attire and save thyself by the daring of thy tongue, as thou hast thus far saved us all by the valor of thine heart.

CHIQUI. That's all well in sound, but then in sense, you see—

LUCA. The duke will never dream 'tis thou; she who bore thee could not suspect thy noble person in this dress.

RITA. The duke would kill thee. Take a great revenge, make him the lackey of thy manly wit; fool him to his perdition, and our safety. In those concealing skirts thou'lt find it easy, with such wondrous wit as thine.

CHIQUI. Damme! I never thought of that, it may be done indeed. Ha, ha, ha! I begin to like the joke. I'll play the woman on the duke, until I set him mad! Ha, ha! Like this—[*In woman's voice*] “By truth and ruth, and youth—your majesty—I saw them running like a pack o' loons; that way, that very way, two fair women and one man; the man I'll swear to, his bearing was so brave, he won my maiden heart at once.” Ha, ha! How's that?

RITA. Wonderful!

LUCA. Amazing!

RITA. Thy wit hath not a match in all this world, but thine own courage.

CHIQUI. [*With enthusiasm*] Damme, but that's true!

RITA. Come, then, with us to the border of the wood, and then return to trick this tyrant duke, and turn him from our track.

CHIQUI. An' I don't, I'll ne'er wear breeches again. Come on! [*Offers them his arms; they dance off as he sings:*]

Hie-die-diddle,
 Woman is a fiddle,
 And man is e'er her bow.
 So when they get together,
 In any sort of weather,
 They make sweet music, O—O—O—!
 They make sweet music, O—!

[*Exeunt, R.1.E., together, singing dying away into distance. Pause. Stage grows darker*]

VICO. [*Stealing on, R.3.E., with gun*] Upon the southern shore of Cenci Lake. [*Looking upstage*] There's the lake. A row of several pines. [*Feels about*]

TORR. [*Stealing on L.3.E., with gun*] At the foot of the third pine, an old stone seat. [*Feeling first pine, on L.*] First.

VICO. [*Feeling pine, on R.*] One.

BOTH. [*Touching second pine*] Second. Two.

TORR. [*Starting, aside*] What's that?

VICO. [*Aside, listening*] A noise.

TORR. [*Aside*] Nothing.

VICO. [*Aside*] The wind. [*They touch third pine together on opposite sides, exclaiming together*]

TORR. Third!

VICO. Three!

TORR. [*L.*] Who's there?

VICO. One who's master here.

TORR. [*Recognizing voice*] Vico?

VICO. Aye. And you?

TORR. Torriani.

VICO. The count! This is not our meeting-place, my lord. I told you at the Giant Rock.

TORR. Well, then—go and fare thee well.

VICO. Are you not going, count?

TORR. No, I'm tired, I'll rest here. Good night, Master Vico. Leave me; I wish to be alone. [*Steps toward stone seat, L.*]

VICO. [*Going to stone seat, R.*] So do I.

TORR. Seek solitude elsewhere.

VICO. This place suits my humor best.

TORR. You forget my rank, sirrah.

VICO. In the forest, count, the woodman is a king.

TORR. Listen, Vico, I await someone here; leave me for awhile. Tomorrow I'll enrich thee.

VICO. My fortune is in this wood. [*Placing stock of gun on seat*] What is here is mine.

TORR. [*Same action as Vico*] Take it if you can.

VICO. Ha! You know, then?

TORR. All.

VICO. Spy!

TORR. Thief!

VICO. [*Recoiling and lifting gun*] Traitor!

TORR. [*Same action as Vico*] Beware! I, too, am armed.

VICO. Then 'tis a duel to the death.

TORR. Stay! A bargain! Let us share the treasure—to you the jewels, to me the papers.

VICO. To me the jewels?

TORR. Every one.

VICO. To work, then.

TORR. To work.

VICO. Lay down your gun.

TORR. After you.

VICO. No, together. [*Watching each other, they lay down their guns*]
Now let us hurry. [*They lift up stone seat*]

TORR. It lies there—how unearth it?

VICO. We must make hoes of our hands, my lord.

TORR. Thy hands are hard, do thou the digging; I'll watch to see no spy approaches.

VICO. So be it. [*He goes hard at work. Moon rises. Torriani watching Vico, suddenly by pantomime, shows he means to kill Vico. In exultation*]
Ha! The casket's here.

TORR. [*Springing on gun*] Stop! I hear steps.

VICO. [*Starting up*] Someone coming?

TORR. Silence! [*Steals to one side, pretending to look off*]

VICO. Well?

TORR. They are going away. I hear nothing more.

VICO. Then once more to work.

TORR. Aye—but I work alone. [*Fires*]

VICO. [*Staggering to his gun*] Ha! Assassin! [*Tries to lift gun. Falls forward*]

TORR. [*Feeling Vico's body*] Dead! Now to hide his carcass. [*Drags body upstage, R., and covers it with broken branches, then crosses quickly and lifts casket from earth, opens it*] Ha! Jewels, papers, last will of Duke Andrea! Story of the son, place of meeting, signs, all—ha, ha! Philip of Morena, from this hour I am thy tyrant! Lie there, sweet power. [*Places papers in his breast*] The jewels are too heavy, let him get and hold who can. [*Puts casket back*] I will conceal the place again. [*Puts back earth and seat hastily*] Now to confront this vile ungrateful duke. [*Starts to go, L. Stops, returns*] No, not with these papers on my person; he'd force them from me, and the power they confer, I'd lose in losing them. I must confide them to another—but to whom—to whom? I've not a single friend that I can trust in all the world. [*Chiqui heard singing outside. Torriani starts and looks off, R.*] A woman coming this way, some belated servant of the convent. Ha! She may be the very one I need to keep my papers, and to do my will. I'll flatter the wench—aye—the

shortest road to a woman's heart is through her vanity. [*He stands aside, upstage, L.*]

CHIQUI. [*Entering, R., singing in a falsetto voice, advancing to C.*]

"In life are many ways to rule,
Man or beast or friend or fool,
But of all the ways the best I know
Is that our woman's wit doth show.
For we by winsome wiles and smiles,
Do make a slave of king or knave,
Or craven cur or warrior brave—
Or priest who vows from sin to save."

[*Laughing*] Ha, ha, ha! Now by the Mass! There's more valor in a jade's frock than in the strongest coat of mail a male e'er wore. Now could I face Satan himself and laugh him dumb, ha, ha, ha! [*Torriani advances, down L.C. Chiqui turns, discovers Torriani, and recoils in terror*] Oh, the devil! [*Recoils, down R.*]

TORR. You flatter me, sweet nymph.

CHIQUI. [*Recovering himself, and aside*] Nymph! He called me nymph; ha, ha! I'm safe. From this hour I'm a she from head to heels. I'll practise on this clown the foolery I meant to put upon the duke. Damme! I'll be a very kitten.

TORR. Divine vision of the wood, if thou hast heart of flesh and blood to feel for suffering man, I beseech you, one kind word.

CHIQUI. [*Advancing, looking at him, then coyly*] I know you not, dear gentleman.

TORR. Alas! I'm one misfortune hath imprisoned in this wood, and kept without a sight of thy dear sex for years. [*Ardent movement toward Chiqui*]

CHIQUI. [*Crossing quickly, L., and with affected timidity*] Oh, sir! I prithee look not so, you frighten me. The air of night is cold; my voice is getting husky; I must hie me home; my mother doth not know that I am out. [*Starts off, L.*]

TORR. Stay, dear innocence. Take pity on my solitude. [*Grasping Chiqui's hand*] Nay, thou shalt not go.

CHIQUI. Unhand me, sir, my maiden modesty is shocked.

TORR. Forgive me, but I must woo thee while I can. I prithee trust me.

CHIQUI. I cannot till I know thy name.

TORR. And if I tell thee wilt thou listen to my suit?

CHIQUI. My ears are open, gentle sir, and my heart still young and tender.

TORR. I will trust thee, for I feel that thou'rt as kind as thou art lovely. Promise me that thou'lt ne'er betray my secret?

CHIQUI. May I never marry man if I do.

TORR. Then listen. [*Trumpets sound in distance*] What's that? [*Chiqui starts in fear*]

CHIQUI. [*In agitation*] 'Tis the escort of the duke!

TORR. Coming this way?

CHIQUI. Aye, sweet sir—his highness is returning from the convent.

TORR. [*Aside*] Ha! Then my hour is at hand. I must win this wench to do my will for one short day. [*Aloud*] Listen, lovely maid, and thank the stars that put thee in my path this night. I'm one that cruel wrong hath damnably traduced, but be thou true this night, and before another day hath passed I'll give thee means to taste all the pleasures of this world.

CHIQUI. [*With sudden eager interest*] I prithee how, sweet sir?

TORR. By marrying thee to one second only to the duke.

CHIQUI. [*Edging away, puzzled*] And who may that be, sir?

TORR. Myself.

CHIQUI. Tush! You trifle with my girlish confidence!

TORR. Thou'rt wrong. Do but my bidding now, and by tomorrow I'll be the duke's prime minister.

CHIQUI. And marry me?

TORR. Aye.

CHIQUI. [*With affected rage, edging away*] Seducer! Thou wouldst lead mine innocence astray!

TORR. By all that's true I'll keep my promise; of that I'll give thee proofs.

CHIQUI. [*Crossing to him in excitement*] Prove that thou, a lord, will make of me a lady, and I'll ne'er doubt magic more.

TORR. [*Taking papers from breast*] Can'st thou read?

CHIQUI. Nothing, my lord, but palms and weathercocks.

TORR. [*Aside*] Good! She cannot understand, then, the power these bestow. [*Aloud*] Would'st thou be rich?

CHIQUI. Aye, would I, sooner than hang.

TORR. Would'st thou be great among the ladies of the court?

CHIQUI. [*After pause, with conviction*] To be great among women I would risk damnation.

TORR. Then mark well my words.

CHIQUI. I'm nought but ear, my lord.

TORR. Hide these in thy virgin breast, and swear by all thy hopes of greatness, never, without my leave, to show them to woman, priest, or man.

CHIQUI. [*Taking papers*] I swear it by my maidenhood; may that be damned the day that I break faith with these. [*Puts papers in breast*]

TORR. Two hours after dawn tomorrow I will meet thee here, prepared to keep my word. If I fail to come, or danger threaten me, swear to seek out Marco.

CHIQUI. The great Justice of the State?

TORR. The same. Take to him the papers in thy breast, and he will reward thee with the greatness I have promised. If thou fail to keep thy word, death will o'ertake us both.

CHIQUI. An' I fail, my lord, I'll ne'er wear skirts again.

TORR. [*Crossing, L.*] 'Tis well. Go, dear love, begone! I see the torches of the guard are near at hand. Go, and on thy life let not the duke get sight of these.

CHIQUI. [*Aside*] An' he do, damme! [*Going R., and aloud*] Farewell, sweet spouse, until tomorrow! [*Exit, R.3E.*]

TORR. [*Alone*] Now to halt this tyrant, and teach him how wit can fool force. [*He hides behind pine, C. Enter Duke and Sergeant, followed by guards with torches*]

DUKE. [*L.C.*] Halt! [*To Sergeant*] Is not this the very wood in which that traitor Torriani is in hiding?

SERGEANT. 'Tis said so, my lord.

DUKE. Attention, all of ye! I have offered five hundred ducats for the head of this scurvy Captain Chiqui. I now offer five thousand ducats to the man who finds me that villain Torriani.

TORR. [*Advancing, C.*] I claim the prize, your highness.

DUKE. Torriani! Audacious wretch! [*To Guards*] Seize him!

TORR. [*Stopping Guards*] Stay! The man who lays a hand on me is traitor to the duke!

DUKE. What means this daring insolence?

TORR. [*Crossing to Duke and aside*] It means, dear duke, that if you arrest me tonight, tomorrow you will die.

DUKE. What! You think to frighten with vain words?

TORR. Would I stop your passage thus, unless I held proofs of what I say?

DUKE. Proofs! Where are they?

TORR. Order these fellows out of hearing, and you shall know them.

DUKE. [*After reflecting, to Sergeant*] Stand aside, but surround this spot, and let none escape who may be here. [*Exit Sergeant with Guards, R. and L.*] Understand, I but defer my justice for awhile.

TORR. My lord, in another moment you will recall your guards and place them at my command.

DUKE. Boaster!

TORR. Hugo, the last son of Duke Andrea is not dead.

DUKE. [*Laughing*] What! He's lived for fifteen years in coffin?

TORR. The burial of that infant was a farce. I have the papers Duke Andrea left, revealing his secret disposition of the child, and announcing his last will. These papers, chance, and mine own courage have placed at my command.

DUKE. Do you dare to say that boy still lives?

TORR. If he does not—take my life.

DUKE. [*Eagerly*] And these papers—you will give to me—at once?

TORR. Oh, no, my lord; I will not give—I sell them only—and at the very highest price. To secure them I have once more stained my hands in human blood for you. [*Pulling branches off Vico's body*] Behold!

DUKE. Murdered!

TORR. Removed, my lord, for state reasons of import. His death hath saved your life. From him I won the proofs that doom your rule to ruin.

DUKE. And so these dangerous parchments are now within thy hands?

TORR. Oh, no, my lord. I wisely placed these precious pages where I can command them by a sign, and yet conceal them from the sun.

DUKE. 'Tis naught but a cunning ruse of thine.

TORR. Open the tomb of Duke Andrea, and you will find the coffin of his royal child is empty.

DUKE. Empty?

TORR. Tarry but till tomorrow, and Andrea's son will summon the Ducal Senators, who then expect his coming, to adjudge his right to mount his father's throne.

DUKE. He's here, then, alive, and in Morena?

TORR. Aye, indeed!

DUKE. Where?

TORR. That is my affair. As Prime Minister of your estate—

DUKE. Prime Minister!

TORR. Aye, my lord, to you or Duke Andrea's son—

DUKE. You forget your life is in my hand.

TORR. And you forget your throne's in mine.

CHIQUI. [*Outside, R.*] Nay, nay! Let me go, let me go! [*Enter Sergeant and Guards, with Chiqui, struggling, R.2.E.*]

DUKE. [*Crossing, C.*] Who's this?

SERGEANT. [*Bringing Chiqui down, R.C.*] A stalwart wench we caught here spying in the wood.

CHIQUI. Nay, nay! I am no spy; I'm nothing but a helpless, harmless maid.

DUKE. We'll soon prove that. Search her, sergeant. [*Crosses, L.*]

TORR. [*Crossing, C.*] Stay! Hands off this woman!

DUKE. [*With rage*] Count—!

TORR. [*Going up, C.*] Guards! The duke your master hath been pleased to restore me to his favor and my rank, giving me command of all his troops. Is not this so, your highness? [*Duke, in suppressed rage, makes sign of affirmation with his head*] As for this poor maid, to her loving care I am indebted for my life.

CHIQUI. [*Aside*] Oh, Mercury! God of lies! Hear that!

TORR. Free her, then, at once. [*Guards release Chiqui. Aside to Chiqui, C.*] I've saved thy life, sweet wench; get hence at once and by thy virtue forget not our engagement here tomorrow morn. [*Pointing, L.*] To the convent!

CHIQUI. [*Crossing, L.*] An' I forget, dear love, pair me with a goose. [*Exit, L. & E.*]

TORR. [*To Duke*] Now, sire, let's on to the empty tomb of Duke Andrea's son, for that will prove the truth of what I say.

DUKE. Nay, tonight I must secure this woodman's daughter. But for her, Andrea's child had been my wife and I prepared to outface every other heir. I swear I'll not rest till I have found this Rita, and avenged my wrongs.

TORR. What vengeance will you have?

DUKE. Dishonor! Shame! For I am sure that's worse than death to such as she. Furthermore, I'll satisfy the burning passion her spirit hath aroused in me.

TORR. My cunning shall give her to your rage. I know her father's house, where we, disguised, will go to seek her. When once she's found, you'll swear you mean to make her wife. [*To Sergeant*] Haste with stealthy steps to the woods about old Vico's house; there hide, and wait our coming.

SERGEANT. [*Going, R. & E.*] I will, my lord. [*Exit with Guards, R. & E.*]

TORR. Now to find disguises. [*They go off, R. & E.*]

CHIQUI. [*Entering, L. & E., feeling his neck*] God's life! 'Tis wonderful I'm yet unhung! Egad! To petticoats I owe my life. On those that wear them I will lavish life while it doth last. Damme—so I will! [*Laughs. Vico groans. Chiqui starts*] What's that? [*Groans repeated. Chiqui shivers*] S—S—Saints! Mercy! Murder!

Vico. [*Groaning*] Water! Help, or I die!

CHIQUI. Where are you?

Vico. [*Crawling down from branches, R. & C.*] Here!

CHIQUI. Who are you?

Vico. Vico.

CHIQUI. Rita's father?

VICO. Aye, dying, murdered!

CHIQUI. Murdered?

VICO. Aye—by Torriani.

CHIQUI. My sweetheart—an assassin?

VICO. If thou lov'st thy native land—stoop low and listen.

CHIQUI. Fear not. [*Kneeling and supporting Vico*] I'll hear—and help ye! Speak!

VICO. [*Pointing to seat*] There—casket—buried—papers stolen—by Torriani—prove Andrea's son still lives. See Marco—tell him all. [*Gasping*] Ah! I die! In mercy—let me have—thy prayers—[*Falls back dead*]

CHIQUI. Dead! and a wondrous peace upon his face. Good rest, old man. I never saw ye smile before. Egad! If this be death, what fools be we who fear!

ACT IV.

SCENE: *Same as Act I. Night. At rise, Maria is discovered asleep before chimney, L.C. Moonlight shining through window, L. Fire has gone out. Soft music. Vision of Vico's assassination by Torriani is revealed over mantelpiece. As vision reaches its clearest development, Maria starts up with a scream. Vision instantly fades and music stops.*

MARIA. [*In great agitation going down on knees, C.*] Saints! Mercy! Save us! [*Knocks on door, R.U.E. Starting up*] What's that? [*Enter Jacho, R.U.E. Crossing, L., with a scream*] Who's there?

JACHO. 'Tis I—Jacho.

MARIA. Ah! Thank Heaven—thou hast come!

JACHO. What's amiss?

MARIA. [*Feeling for lamp on table*] I cannot talk till there's a light. [*Finds lamp, strikes flint and steel, lights lamp*]

JACHO. Santa Maria! Thou'rt white as death!

MARIA. [*Clinging to him*] Oh, Jacho—I'm sick o' fear.

JACHO. Fear o' what?

MARIA. [*With chattering teeth*] Ghosts!

JACHO. [*Terrified*] Ghosts?

MARIA. Aye!—But now I saw our master murdered.

JACHO. Murdered? Where?

MARIA. I' the wood!

JACHO. When was this?

MARIA. But now—as I slept i' that old chair.

JACHO. [*Pushing her, R., in disgust*] Thou jade! 'Twas nothing but a dream!

MARIA. [*Recoiling, R., in terror, and pointing behind Jacho*] Ah, see—again—there he stares! [*Hides face in horror. Hugo, in armor, enters quietly, R.U.E.*]

JACHO. [*Horrified, looks slowly over shoulder; seeing nothing, exclaims with great relief*] Bah! Thou'rt the fool of thine own fancy. The room is empty.

HUGO. [*Advancing, C.*] And so am I. [*Maria starts with cry, R.*]

JACHO. [*Recoiling, L.*] Who are you?

HUGO. Marry! I wish I knew, friend Jacho.

MARIA. [*Amazed*] Master Hugo, in armor?

HUGO. Aye, a soldier once again, and here to say farewell.

MARIA. Art going away?

HUGO. 'Till doomsday, very like. Where is Mistress Rita?

MARIA. Gone since noon. I never knew her out so late before. I fear disaster—

HUGO. To Rita?

MARIA. Aye, this hath been a black day to us all.

HUGO. [*To Jacho*] Odds life! But we must search the woods at once! Come on! [*They start up, R. Enter Rita and Luca, R.U.E. Seizing Rita's hand*] Thank God! Thou'rt safe!

RITA. [*Crossing, L., in surprise*] Who's this?

HUGO. [*Uncovering*] Thy slave, dear heart.

RITA. [*Amazed*] Master Hugo! [*Luca, R.C., watches Hugo*]

HUGO. Aye, and in a fine fright for a soldier. But what means this bridal dress, and what hath kept thee out so late?

RITA. [*Pointing at Luca*] My friend will tell you, sir.

HUGO. Sir—to me?

RITA. [*Crossing, R., to Luca*] I pray you, permit me. This is Mistress Luca, of the convent—Master Hugo. [*Luca curtsies*]

HUGO. [*Bowing*] Your servant, mistress. [*Aside, crossing, L.*] Strange! Clad so richly and so cold. [*Exit Jacho, L.I.E.*]

RITA. [*R.C., to Luca, aside*] Tell all—I dare not trust myself to speak with him. [*Crosses, R.*]

LUCA. [*Crossing, R.C., and looking at Hugo with delight*] It is! It is! The very image of his sire.

HUGO. [*L.C. Surprised*] Madam?

LUCA. Thank Heaven! I live to see this day!

HUGO. Nay then, good woman, what is this?

LUCA. 'Tis the mercy of God, that sends me here in time to warn you. Philippo the usurper may overtake us yet, and so prevent our meeting at Duke Andrea's tomb.

HUGO. [*Starting*] What's that thou say'st?

LUCA. Tomorrow eve you were to meet a woman at the Cenci church.

HUGO. How know you that?

LUCA. That woman was to ask three questions, which you should rightly answer with three words.

HUGO. Aye.

LUCA. I am she who should have questioned you tomorrow, but the peril of the hour doth force me to the test at once. Answer, as I know you can, and learn your name and lineage.

HUGO. You know, then?

LUCA. All, as I will prove. [*Drawing him aside, L.*] Answer now at once. What's the hardest of all things to get for him who hath it not, and yet most needful for us all to have, to live out life aright?

HUGO. Courage.

LUCA. What should courage rule, to keep it undefiled?

HUGO. Justice.

LUCA. For what, most nobly, doth all justice rule, or courage overcome?

HUGO. [*Uncovering*] Humanity.

LUCA. [*Crossing, C.*] Kneel! Kneel all of ye! For this is Duke Andrea's son, his heir, and our true sovereign. [*Rita kneels, R.C., Maria, R., Luca, C.*]

HUGO. I, Duke Andrea's son?

LUCA. Aye, that royal martyr's child! He whom, as a babe, this bosom fed.

HUGO. [*Kneeling, L.C.*] Hear! O Heaven, the vow of filial love! To justice and humanity I pledge all the blood and courage of my heart. May brain and hand both wither, and all sense be turned to torture, if e'er I rest until my father's and my country's wrongs have been avenged. [*Rising and raising Luca, C.*] Dear nurse, thou didst feed me from a mother's breast, take now a son's embrace.

LUCA. [*Kissing his hands passionately*] My boy! My lord! My duke! [*Crosses, L.*]

HUGO. [*Crossing and raising Rita*] And thou who gav'st, unstinted, to the nameless man, the priceless treasure of a maiden's love, now take a husband's hand.

RITA. [*Crossing, L.C.*] Nay, nay! I cannot! I dare not!

HUGO. And what dost fear?

RITA. Your station, sire.

HUGO. By Heaven! What I was this morn I am this eve, no more. Thou didst take me then for naught but what in rankless nature I myself might prove, not caring though I came from Cain. So now I, who come from kings, claim thee for that I know thou art: God's royal gift to man—an honest woman.

RITA. [*Turning toward him with extended arms, C.*] Oh, my dear, dear lord!

HUGO. [*Taking her in his arms*] Nay, nay, thy sweetheart! By my soul, I think thou dost not love me!

RITA. Indeed, you know I do.

HUGO. Then prove it quickly.

RITA. Alas! I could not, though I had a thousand lives to lay in thy dear hands.

HUGO. I say thou canst, with naught but thy two lips.

RITA. Nay, words still mean too little.

HUGO. Aye, but kisses mean so much, and lips were made to kiss as well as speak. So come, just one for love and luck. [*Rita puts up her face. Hugo kisses Rita, then exclaims*] Ye gods! I never knew till now, how royal 'twas to be a man!

LUCA. My lord, beware! Joy doth tempt us to forget the danger of the time. We must away—for Satan's on our track. [*Rita crosses, R.*]

HUGO. Good! I'll stop and meet him. I long to make his majesty's acquaintance.

LUCA. We must hurry hence to Marco's house, for he alone can save our lives, and prove your right to rule.

RITA. Oh, come, my lord, and as we go, I will explain our peril.

HUGO. Thy peril? By Heaven! If there's aught that threatens thee, that aught I want to meet.

LUCA. Nay nay! You shall not. We must fly at once.

HUGO. [*Laughing*] Fly? Not till I have wings. Show me the reckless fool that dares to cause ye fear, I'll teach him better manners.

LUCA. 'Tis Philippo of Morena.

HUGO. The one in all the world I am most bound to meet.

RITA. And if you're killed, what hope is left for us?

HUGO. True. I'll see you first in safety to great Marco's house, and then—well—let us go. [*Starts up, C.*]

PAULO. [*Outside, L.*] Rita! Rita!

RITA. [*Starting and crossing, L.C.*] My brother's voice! [*Hugo comes down, R.C.*]

PAULO. [*Entering with casket, L.I.E.*] Rita! Rita!

RITA. What is't?

PAULO. Ruin, shame! The casket hath been robbed.

RITA. Robbed!

PAULO. Aye—the jewels are all here, but see—[*Crossing, R.C.*] Andrea's will is gone.

HUGO. [*Coming down, C.*] Nay, Andrea's will lives in Andrea's son. This arm shall prove the blood that courses in my veins.

PAULO. [*To Rita*] He knows?

RITA. All.

PAULO. Sire, my father was your father's soldier, and his friend. I pray you now, let me in turn, be both to my true sovereign.

HUGO. Aye, and so thou shalt! My soldier, friend, and brother, too.

PAULO. Brother! You know, then, that Laura is your sister?

HUGO. Laura, thy love, my sister?

PAULO. Aye, thy sister—though not my love till I have won thy will to make her mine.

HUGO. By Heaven! Let me meet her and I'll plead thy cause. [*Enter Chiqui, L.I.E.*]

CHIQUI. [*Looking back, with signs to be silent*] Whist! Whist!

HUGO. [*Amazed*] Who's this? [*Hugo and Paulo meet, up R.C.*]

CHIQUI. [*Drawing Luca and Rita mysteriously, C.*] Whist! [*Looks about in fear*] Silence! Beware!

RITA. What is't?

CHIQUI. The fiend himself! In other words, the duke.

LUCA. Coming here?

CHIQUI. Aye, to spy ye out. An' ye love life or virtue, love me, for I am both to you. But for the depth and volume of my wit, death like a lecherous Turk would wed and bed ye both this very night.

RITA. Are we safe then, now?

CHIQUI. Aye! Safe to be damned. [*Rita crosses, L., to Luca*]

LUCA. Damned?

CHIQUI. Sure as sin! [*Turning and looking at Paulo and Hugo*] Unless these gapers here obey me like a flash.

HUGO. [*Down R.*] Who art thou, woman?

CHIQUI. [*Indignantly*] Woman! [*Checking himself*] 'Tis well there's ne'er a lack of fools, or there'd be hanging ere the morn.

HUGO. What's all this mean?

CHIQUI. Mischief! Black and wild. Obey me blindly, all of ye, or I desert, and then damnation's sure.

RITA. [*L.C.*] What are we to do?

CHIQUI. First you two babes of woe must hide.

HUGO. Hide! Nay, we'll none o' that. If there be danger, we'll outface it.

CHIQUI. An' ye try that folly—phist! Good-by—ye're done for.

LUCA. Done for!

CHIQUI. Aye, past medication. The duke's at hand, his guards surround the house.

HUGO. Bah! Come on, I'll soon cut out our way. [*Crossing, L.C., to Rita*] Follow, and fly, whilst I fight.

CHIQUI. [*R.C.*] Nay, nay! 'Tis certain death!

HUGO. [*C.*] Aye—to some of the rogues.

CHIQUI. [*Interfering between Rita and Hugo*] Nay, risk thine own life if ye like, thou shalt not peril hers. [*Grasps Rita's hand, and draws her across, R.*]

HUGO. Eh! How's this? [*Chiqui takes Rita into window, L.*]

LUCA. Stay! [*Aside to Hugo*] By all your hope of ever righting your dear father's wrong, I pray you be advised. This creature here knows more than now appears.

HUGO. But, nurse—

LUCA. Nay, trust me, I have a plan. [*To Paulo*] Fly to Marco, and bid him hasten here to shield the right from wrong. [*Hugo crosses, R.*]

PAULO. [*Crossing to L.*] I'll bring rescue, or I'll die! [*Exit, L.I.E.*]

RITA. [*To Chiqui in window, pointing R., through window*] Look yonder—see those soldiers, stealing through the trees?

CHIQUI. 'Tis that woodenhead, the sergeant, with the guard.

RITA. [*Rushing down, R., to Hugo*] The duke is coming!

CHIQUI. [*Terrified, C.*] O petticoats! Protect me now!

LUCA. [*L.C.*] We must conceal ourselves till Marco hath appeared.

MARIA. [*Opening door in chimney*] Aye, here i' the old oven. The fire's out—the place is safe.

CHIQUI. [*Delighted*] And the last they'd think to search.

RITA. [*To Hugo as she crosses to oven*] Come! Come quickly!

HUGO. I hide? Nay, I'll hang first.

CHIQUI. Then hang! Aye, dangle i' the air! Our aims are not so high.

RITA. [*To Hugo*] I beseech—entreat you! Your life is the sole hope of our native land.

CHIQUI. [*Impatiently*] Hide! Or you are doomed! [*Looks out of window*]

HUGO. [*To Rita*] In—and fear not. I'll watch outside.

RITA. But thou art rash.

HUGO. For such a cause as mine, rashness shall be ruled by reason. [*Rita hesitates, about to speak. Checking Rita.*] Nay, no more—go at once.

CHIQUI. [*Coming down to oven*] In—in, I say! Perdition is at hand! [*Rita and Luca rush into oven. Closing oven door*] Could I clap the duke i' such a hole, I'd light a fire and let him feel a foretaste o' the future. [*Comes down, laughing, C. Suddenly checks himself with a look of horror*] Zounds! I laugh—whilst death comes here with this vile duke! He'll see me once again—question how I'm here! [*Crossing nervously to Maria, L.C.*] Girl!

MARIA. Well, mistress?

CHIQUI. Quick, thy needles, where are they?

MARIA. My needles?

CHIQUI. Aye! And hark ye, I'm thy cousin.

MARIA. My cousin?

CHIQUI. Aye, make me thy cousin now, at once—or condemn thy mistress to perdition.

MARIA. But, madam—

CHIQUI. Madam, the devil! Am I thy cousin, or shall thy mistress die?

MARIA. Thou'rt my cousin.

CHIQUI. Then thy needles.

MARIA. [*Handing them*] Here!

CHIQUI. [*Taking them, sitting R. of table, and pretending to knit*] Now remember who I am or we are lost, and mind ye, I'm at home.

HUGO. [*C.*] What mummerly is this?

CHIQUI. Mummerly! 'Tis murder, an' you do not mark my will.

HUGO. Who art thou?

CHIQUI. Thy sister.

HUGO. Aye! In Adam.

CHIQUI. Adam! Pronounce it a dam, boy, for without a dam there's no breeding, without breeding no brats, without brats no brothers. Had not Eve been a dam, Adam had ne'er been damned—so to make it short, be my brother this night, and I care not a damn for the rest.

HUGO. Phew! What a litter of dams!

CHIQUI. [*Starting and dropping needles*] Great Cæsar! I forget again!

HUGO. What?

CHIQUI. He'll put thee to the question.

HUGO. I'll answer him.

CHIQUI. Nay, I trust thee not. Thou'rt readier wi' sword than tongue. Thou could'st not stand the inquisition.

HUGO. I'll take my chance.

CHIQUI. 'Od rot *thy* chance! [*Pointing to oven*] 'Tis Rita's maddens me!

HUGO. And Rita?

CHIQUI. The oven and my wit will keep her safe—so thou'rt not here. One little word from thee would ruin us—unless it echoed all my lies.

HUGO. Thou'rt right—I'm dull at lies—I'll wait outside till I am needed. [*Crossing to L.I.E.*]

CHIQUI. And stay till the fiend is gone—or I may call thee.

HUGO. Fear not—play thy game—I'll not take a hand, till what Rita hath at stake's in peril. [*Exit, L.I.E. Knocks heard at door, R.U.E.*]

CHIQUI. [*Starting*] Silence! they're here. Mark me, girl, I'm Martha. Thy name is—?

MARIA. Maria.

CHIQUI. Well, then, Maria, remember, I'm thy cousin, and a maid. [*Maria nods assent. Knocks repeated. Chiqui sits at table and picks up needles*] Open the door, and mark ye, forget not I'm a maid. [*Maria opens the door. Enter Torriani and Duke, who goes down, R.*]

TORR. [*Down R.C.*] This is woodman Vico's house?

MARIA. [*C.*] Aye, sir! But the master is away.

TORR. And his children?

MARIA. Are not here.

TORR. Where, then?

MARIA. I know not. [*Crosses down, L.*]

CHIQUI. [*Rising and crossing, C.*] Fie, fie! Maria, thou knowest well that they have gone to—[*Looking close at Torriani*] Eh! How's this? An' my eyes be true, 'tis my wooer o' the wood.

TORR. [*Starting*] Thou here?

CHIQUI. [*Pointing at Maria*] Aye, on a visit to my cousin.

TORR. [*Aside*] She here! In this house, of all others! [*Aloud to Chiqui, C.*] One word aside.

CHIQUI. A thousand, sweetheart.

TORR. 'Tis lucky we have met, for I need the papers confided to thy care.

CHIQUI. That's bad.

TORR. Bad! Thou hast not parted with them?

CHIQUI. Parted with 'em! Nay, I'd rather part with petticoats.

TORR. Then quick!

CHIQUI. Aye! And so I will, dear lord, when thou dost marry me.

TORR. That I cannot do until I have the papers.

CHIQUI. When thou art ready with the priest, true love, I'll have them close at hand.

TORR. So be it, then. Assist me now, and thy bright dreams shall all be realized.

CHIQUI. Assist thee! An' I don't, may I never be thy wife! [*Crosses, L.C.*]

TORR. Thy name, dear maid?

CHIQUI. Martha, love.

TORR. [*Presenting Duke*] Well, Martha, this is Signor Salvador—[*Chiqui curtsies*] Mistress Rita's uncle, who, hearing some misfortune hath fallen on this house, hath hurried here to help the niece he loves.

CHIQUI. [*In lamentation*] Think of that! And this of all days i' the year. Well now, hang fortune for a crazy jade.

TORR. What's the matter?

CHIQUI. Matter? Matter to make an angel weep with rage. If your honor had only come yesterday, or tomorrow; but tonight! Ah! Why were mothers ever made?

DUKE. What rigmarole is this?

CHIQUI. It's not rigmarole, it's maternity—dear master.

DUKE. Maternity!

CHIQUI. Aye, for she hath gone to see her mother.

DUKE. How can she go to her mother, that is dead?

CHIQUI. That's as easy as falling, master, if the mother be but buried, for then she's naught to do but leg it to the churchyard, where poor mother-ridden Rita now kneels at prayer.

DUKE. [*Aside to Torriani*] This woman lies, Rita's here.

TORR. Why think you that?

DUKE. Because this wench declares she's far away. Mark, now, and see. [*Crossing, C. Aloud*] Well, Martha, I'm glad to find my niece so pious. I'll make myself at home till she returns. [*Crosses to table and sits*]

CHIQUI. [*Crossing, C.*] Eh! Returns! Who spoke of return—did you, Maria?

MARIA. Not I, cousin.

CHIQUI. Take care thou dost not, for 'twould be a crime to misdirect her uncle so. There's the woe of it, dear master, she doth not return.

DUKE. Ah—how so?

CHIQUI. Well—you see—it seems—that is—I know not why—but then, as I was saying—

MARIA. [*L.*] Why, 'tis very simple, sir, Master Vico's ruined, and this house is no longer his.

CHIQUI. Of course—that's it—exactly.

DUKE. Hum! I understand. Well—[*To Torriani*] Friend, we'll tarry here tonight—tomorrow seek my niece.

CHIQUI. Tarry here! Impossible! No beds are here but for myself and cousin.

DUKE. What o' that? The boards are beds for us.

CHIQUI. Nay, then, but ye see—'twould not be right for such modest maids as we to sleep alone, beneath this roof, with men we did not know.

DUKE. Bah! You've heard I'm Rita's uncle. 'Tis meet ye give fewer words and better cheer. We'll have some supper.

MARIA. Alas! We've naught but bread and wine.

DUKE. Well, then, we'll brew a punch—a good hot punch. Come, hurry, make the fire.

CHIQUI. Fire! Where?

DUKE. I' the chimney, girl, where else?

CHIQUI. [*Aside, in terror*] An' we do, Rita will be roasted.

TORR. Well, dost thou hear? A fire, quick, a fire!

CHIQUI. A fire! A night like this? [*Fanning himself with his apron*] We'd melt.

DUKE. Nonsense! 'Tis autumn and the nights are chill.

CHIQUI. [*Mysteriously*] Whist!

DUKE. What is't?

CHIQUI. Talk not o' punch i' this house; Master Vico may come.

DUKE. And if he does?

CHIQUI. He'd tear the roof about our heads, he maddens at the smell o' punch.

DUKE. He'll not come.

CHIQUI. Aye, but he will.

DUKE. You forget—this house is his no longer.

CHIQUI. Eh! Yes! Of course—but then—

DUKE. Well?

CHIQUI. Must ye have the truth?

DUKE. Aye! At once.

CHIQUI. I did not like to say it—but on my life! The thought o' punch doth turn my stomach.

DUKE. [*Rising*] Enough o' this. Come, wench, bestir—a fire, quick! [*Points at fireplace. Maria crosses in fear to chimney*]

CHIQUI. [*Aside*] Oh, Rita! Thou'lt taste damnation e'er thy time! [*Maria, followed up by Duke, places wood in fireplace*] Holy stars! I cannot see this cookery. [*They light fire. Rushing forward*] Stop! Stop! 'Tis murder, death!

DUKE. Murder—to whom?

CHIQUI. To them—us—all—damme! Don't you see? That is, by Heaven! Beneath the hearth is stored a mine of powder!

DUKE. Powder?

CHIQUI. In another instant—paff! Away we go to Hell! [*Noise inside oven*] Hark! Th' explosion's coming. [*Cry inside*] Fools! Quick! Put out the fire. [*Maria and Chiqui rush to fire, about to pull logs out*]

DUKE. [*Sternly, crossing, R.C.*] Stop! You shall not touch a coal! [*Beating heard at oven door*] Open that door.

CHIQUI. [*Recoiling, down L.*] Farewell, fortune! Doomsday dawns! [*Maria opens door, Rita rushes out, choking, and supporting Luca to chair, L.C.*]

DUKE. [*To Torriani*] Ha! I knew it! 'Tis she!

TORR. Rita?

DUKE. Aye. Now for my revenge. [*Whispers in ear of Torriani*]

RITA. [*Placing Luca in chair*] Quick! Water! Nay, wine! [*Maria brings wine; low to Maria*] Duke Hugo, is he safe?

MARIA. Aye; he 'waits your brother i' the wood.

RITA. God keep him! [*Crosses, C., to Duke and Torriani*] Well, sirs, ye've found the prey ye seek, and doubtless are content.

DUKE. Content is tame. The joy a miser feels in counting untold gold now masters me at sight of thee.

RITA. You come to wreak your coward malice on the weakness of a woman, but I have that shall thwart your will, though it were strong as Jove's.

DUKE. Ha! So you hope to 'scape me?

RITA. [*Drawing dagger*] Aye—with this.

DUKE. [*Touching sword*] Dost think thy weapon can match mine?

RITA. Outmatch it, sir. The kind keenness of this blade, by dealing instant death, makes salvation sure.

DUKE. Would'st kill thyself? [*Advances*]

RITA. If thou, or any of thy hirelings, dare lay a single hand on me, one little kiss from this shall set me free.

CHIQUI. When kisses kill, it's time to interfere. There's two to one—I'll seek a backer. [*Exit, L.I.E.*]

DUKE. [*Aside*] She sets my blood aflame! [*Aloud*] Mad child, I come not to revenge, but to fulfill. I swore that I would marry thee this night.

RITA. But when you learned my name, condemned me to the rack.

DUKE. Aye. In rage at thy bold trick. But now I love thee with a passion that consumes my very soul. [*Advances on her*]

RITA. Stand back! This is not love, but that vile counterfeit whose look alone degrades.

DUKE. Thou wrong'st me, for I come to make of thee a wife.

RITA. 'Tis now too late, I love another.

DUKE. Ha! Is't so? [*Seizing her, wrenching dagger from her hand and flinging it away*] By Venus! Now that other shall never have you chaste.

RITA. [*Suddenly drawing the Duke's sword, breaking from him, R., and lifting it*] By all that's holy, he shall have me, chaste or dead.

TORR. [*Creeping up, drawing sword and quickly disarming Rita*] Don't be too sure, sweet wench. [*Duke, C., about to lift sword from ground. Hugo rushes on, R.U.E., followed by Chiqui, flings Torriani off, L., and places foot on Duke's sword. Chiqui steals up behind to Rita. Pause, Torriani amazed. Hugo lifts sword and presents it to Duke*]

DUKE. [*Taking sword, L.C. Amazed*] Who art thou?

HUGO. [C.] A soldier.

DUKE. In what service?

HUGO. My friends'.

DUKE. Thy name?

HUGO. My father's.

DUKE. Who was he?

HUGO. My mother's husband.

DUKE. And she?

HUGO. My father's wife.

DUKE. By the Mass! You say too much and tell too little!

HUGO. Better than, like a woman, tell too much, however little I may say.

DUKE. Thou'lt not e'en tell thy name?

HUGO. [*Touching his sword*] Not till this sword hath seen more service.

DUKE. Good! I'm the duke, serve me.

HUGO. Nay, I'd rather slay thee.

DUKE. Ha! That's treason!

HUGO. Naught is treason to a traitor.

DUKE. My sword shall teach thy tongue more prudence.

HUGO. [*Drawing his sword*] Then thy sword hath a keener wit than thee.

TORR. Stay, sir! You cannot cross the weapon of a nameless clod.

HUGO. Thou liest, knave! I am of royal blood and Duke Andrea's son.
[*Rita, Luca and Maria meet upstage, C., in terror*]

DUKE. Torriani—quick, thy sword! Death to the pretender! [*Torriani starts forward. At the same moment Chiqui embraces Torriani*]

CHIQUE. Nay, nay, sweet love! Thou shalt not risk thy life, it's far too precious.

HUGO. [*Crossing Duke's sword*] Here's for father and my native land!
[*Duke and Hugo fight. Hugo brings Duke to his knees, strikes sword from his hand, and puts foot on his neck*]

TORR. [*Struggling with Chiqui*] Let me go!

CHIQUI. Nay, I love thee far too much.

TORR. [*Submitting*] Ye gods! This woman's arms are iron. [*Calling*]
What-ho, there! Without! Guards! Guards!

CHIQUI. [*Stopping Torriani's mouth*] Peace! Thou'lt wake some harmless sleeper!

HUGO. Submit?

DUKE. Never!

HUGO. [*Taking off his foot*] Then rise and try again. [*Duke springs upon his sword. As he does so, Guards rush in, R.U.E.*]

DUKE. Seize them! Seize them all! [*Struggle. Guards seize Rita, Luca, Maria, and Chiqui, and Hugo, who is held L.C. Duke, R.C.*] Ha! 'Tis my turn now. [*To Hugo*] Through thee I'll teach all traitors how to tremble. Die! [*Lifts sword, is about to kill Hugo*]

RITA. [*Shrieks, breaks from Guard, and throws herself between the Duke and Hugo*] Nay, I go first.

DUKE. Aye, and so thou shalt, before his very eyes. [*Lifts sword to strike her. Enter Paulo, Marco and Laura, followed by Senators*]

MARCO. Hold! [*Coming down, C.*] Justice is here! Uncover! [*All doff their hats*]

DUKE. [*R.C.*] 'Tis well, great Marco, you have come in time to punish treason.

MARCO. Where stands the traitor?

DUKE. [*R.C. Pointing at Hugo, L.*] There!

MARCO. [*Starting at sight of Hugo*] This youth?

DUKE. Aye, he hath raised his sword against my life.

MARCO. The living image of the duke that's dead.

DUKE. I charge him with rebellion.

RITA. Rebellion against whom?

DUKE. Against his lawful sovereign.

RITA. He hath no sovereign in this state, for he himself is duke.

LUCA. Aye—the dead Andrea's son.

TORR. 'Tis false! The proofs! The papers!

HUGO. [*Presenting sword to Marco*] Here is one.

MARCO. This is the sword the State gave Duke Andrea when in triumph he returned from Padua.

LUCA. And I, who was chosen by the dead to put a secret test, have found him perfect in response.

TORR. Conspiracy and treason! If he be Andrea's son he hath at his command his father's paper and his will.

CHIQUEI. [*Advancing*] Aye—and so he hath. [*Hands papers to Marco*]

TORR. [*To Chiquei*] Traitress!

CHIQUEI. Thou did'st command, if danger threatened thee, that I should carry them to Marco.

MARCO. [*Looks at papers, then turns to Senators*] Gentlemen! The hour we've awaited for so many bitter years hath come.

PHILIPPO. This is naught but black rebellion. Guards! Do your duty—arrest these traitors! [*Guards about to move on Senators, who draw swords*]

MARCO. Stay! [*To Hugo*] Kneel! [*Hugo kneels*] I, Chief of your Senate and the Supreme Judge of this land, do, in the name of law and justice, now proclaim this youth Andrea's son, and sovereign of our State. [*To Hugo*] Rise, Duke Hugo, and command us all.

HUGO. First, then, for justice. [*To Philippo*] Philippo of Morena, bad, but brave, go free. [*Points off, L.*] Life deprived of power will be worse than death to thee. [*Philippo crosses to L.I.E. Turns back as though to fight, checks himself, shrugs his shoulders, and exit in silence. Crossing up to Torriani, L.C.*] Assassin! Crawling tool of treason! To thee, chains, and a kennel deep and dark.

CHIQUEI. And something more, your highness.

HUGO. What more?

CHIQUEI. [*Dropping petticoats*] These to solace his sad solitude. [*To Guards*] Seize him—masters! [*Guards seize Torriani*]

HUGO and TORR. [*Together*] Chiquei?

CHIQUEI. Aye, Chiquei, the fox, whose wit hath foiled this fiend, and made your highness duke.

RITA. 'Tis true! Reward him for the faithful friendship he hath shown me.

HUGO. Aye, and so we will.

RITA. [*To Chiquei*] I told thee I would prove my love.

CHIQUEI. And so thou hast. [*To Guards*] Away with him. [*To Torriani, imitating Duke*] I tell thee, man—the rack shall be thy bridal couch—and death thy groom. [*Guards drag off Torriani, R.U.E.*]

HUGO. [*To Laura*] Sister, in the name of our dear father, I prithee make this man my brother, for to his speed and courage I owe my life today.

LAURA. And, brother, in the name of our dear mother, I prithee make this maid my sister, for her wit and daring hath freed us from a tyrant's rule.

CHIQUI. Hold! Not so fast! [*Pointing at public*] Behold the tyrant whose iron rule ne'er ends while we have life in art. [*To public*] Nay, ye need not stare! Your will decides our fate, and keeps our mimic world alive. That's why, dear despot,

I implore your benediction for the brave
And some show of mercy even to this Arrant Knave.

CURTAIN

NOTES

To one familiar with phases of the life of Steele MacKaye, written and unwritten, as the maker of these Notes is familiar with them, many autobiographical hints, and allusions to his own early backgrounds in America (New York and Newport), in London and the English Provinces, but especially in Paris, are discernable in the texts of his plays. In *Hazel Kirke* (first entitled, *An Iron Will*) such are evident in the "iron will" of Dunstan Kirke, with reference to the stern Scottish will of his affectionate father, Colonel MacKaye (characteristically well known to his friends and to the family), and in *Dunstan's* partial use of the dialect of Lancashire, where MacKaye acted the leading rôles in Tom Taylor's *Arkwright's Wife* and in *Hamlet*: in *Paul Kauvar* (his masterpiec of stage-craftsmanship)—in allusions to the artist background of *Paul*, as painter; the gently resolute character of *Diane*, reminiscent of his own wife (my mother); and certain definite references to distinguished Parisians, such as the *Abbé de St. Sulpice, de la Roche*, etc., with whose kindred he was acquainted there.

In *Rose Michel*, likewise, the character of *Moulinet* whimsically embodies the author's own addiction, in boyhood (and even in later manhood) to accumulating a promiscuous assortment of adored pets—cats, kittens, outcast curs, snakes, birds, etc.—an assortment which, in our New York home, where I was born, at 46 East Tenth Street, included a litter of white mice, a tiny flock of dwarf Brazilian deer, a tropical anaconda, eleven feet long, presented to him by his friend P. T. Barnum, and at Stamford, where *Rose Michel* was written, a small ranchful of Andalusian poultry, a Rocky Mountain goat, and a stableful of blue ribbon horses, trotters and pacers, liveried by an Irish tramp and an Austrian exile, whom my father befriended. Various instances of this kind are recorded in chapters of *Epoch*. Cf. Vol. 1, pages 41-43, 235-237.

In *Won at Last*, the sea-coast setting is laid in Rhode Island, where at Newport his father had a villa, on Kay Street, which was the boyhood haunt of the James boys, Henry, Wilkie and "Willic" (later Professor William James, of Harvard), with whom, and with John La Farge (who later decorated his Lyceum Theatre in New York), "Jimmie" Steele MacKaye studied painting, under William Morris Hunt, before sailing, at the age of sixteen, for Paris, to continue his studies there, under Troyon, Couture and Messonier. At Newport, doubtless he took part in "hops" and in boyhood social gatherings, but the "guests" of *John Fleming*, in this play (*Mr. Toddy pop, Becky Stingall, et al.*), border in their dialogue too close upon farce to present any truly naturalistic studies of the period and locality. Indeed, their total elimination from the *Dramatis Personae* listed in the cast of the play's first production at Wallack's Theatre shows certainly, I think, that the text here printed is an early version, probably the first draft; for its author labored always assiduously for elimination and condensation in his work, which in this case won, by its latest version, the united praise of the New York critics, as being "unquestionably the best of all the American comedies thus far produced."

In Spite of All, however, may justly be considered a theatrical study of its period and *locale*—the Broadway of the Middle Eighties. In dialogue and setting, it reflects the life behind-the-scenes of the "legitimate" theatre, still Semi-Bohemian in its atmosphere and still very mysterious to the public of staidly indigenous, not-yet-cosmopolitan New York citizens, and of visitors from far-off Boston and Philadelphia and, occasionally, from the *ultima thule* of Buffalo. It is also somewhat surcharged with the atmosphere of New York tavern and club life—of the Hoffman House and of The Lambs, which was then the only actors' club in America. So, on the opening night of *In Spite of All*, at his new Lyceum Theatre, Steele MacKaye—already famed as the author of the record-breaking two-year-standing-room-only *Hazel Kirke* at his Madison Square Theatre, and inventor there of the first moving-stage—was also reputed, among his fellow-

players, as "Shepherd Boy" of The Lambs, who was the eloquent Alcibiades of Delmonico banquets and—twinned with Maurice Barrymore—foremost, at midnight, in Delphic conversation among the Hoffman-House-bar initiates.

As a lad of ten, I was present at his Lyceum Theatre *première*, and recall the hubbub of arrivals in carriages and hansom-cabs, the intimate atmosphere of the richly exquisite little theatre, with its surprise of the folding chairs invented by its architect-playwright, and the wonder-glow of the great varicolored chandelier, beaming softly down its jewelline electric light—the first electric lighting ever seen in a New York theatre. But especially I remember my awe, in being escorted behind the scenes by my sixteen-year-old brother, Will, to his dressing-room, where he made up as "Call Boy," next door to Richard Mansfield, then still in his twenties earning his spurs. The snatches of songs, sung by *Jack Knickerbocker* in the play, were all lilted to popular tunes of the time, for example: "She's a daisy, is my Stella Ann!"—With a change from "Mary" to "Stella," Jack is here singing a portion of the refrain of the then immensely popular song, which was being sung, with broad Irish accent, on streets, in cafés and bar-rooms, throughout America, during the Middle Eighties of the last century. The opening stanza and refrain of the song were as follows:

O, my Mary Ann 's a teacher
 In a great big public school;
 She gets a thousand dollars every year.
 She has charge of all the pupils,
 Ye can never find a fool,
 For Mary gives them all the proper steer.

(Refrain)

She's a darling,
 She's a daisy,
 She's a dumpling,
 She's a lamb!
 You should hear her play
 On the pi—on—ay,
 Such an education has my . . . Ma . . . ry . . . Ann!

Another allusion of Jack's, then "right up to date," is: "Just beats Maud S. all out"—This refers to the famous racing-horse, "Maud S.," whose record of "2:40 on a plank road" entered into the language of that period, making *Maud S.* a synonym of the greatest speed on earth yet attained by any living creature.

During the road-tour of *An Arrant Knave*, Stuart Robson alternated his rôle of *Chiqui* with that of *Bertie, the Lamb*, in Bronson Howard's play, *The Henrietta*, afterwards widely produced under the joint stars, "Robson and Crane." In both plays, the peculiar falsetto pitch of Robson's voice, which at times half broke, lent constant comedy to his smile and his stare, which were at once innocently endearing and sophisticatedly sly. These characteristics also, in his *Moulinet*, gave a season's popularity to the song of *Pollywog*, sung to his dog, the words of which by my mother are preserved among her unpublished verses. (Cf. *Annals of an Era*, p. 321.)

The origin of the plot of *An Arrant Knave* is unknown to me. It appears to have developed in my father's mind, during a severe illness, at Chicago, in the summer of 1888, perhaps suggested by some earlier notes of his. An alternative to its title exists, I think, among his papers, as *St. Martin's Eve*. Little or nothing of autobiographical allusion is hinted by the text, unless it be his life-long reading of Shakespeare's plays, in which as a youth he studied many parts, and later, in London, acted professionally the rôles of *Hamlet* and *Orlando*.

THE COWLED LOVER
AND OTHER PLAYS

A series in twenty volumes of hitherto unpublished plays collected with the aid of the Rockefeller Foundation, under the auspices of the Dramatists' Guild of the Authors' League of America, edited with historical and bibliographical notes.

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The Cowled Lover

& Other Plays

BY ROBERT MONTGOMERY BIRD

EDITED BY EDWARD H. O'NEILL

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INTRODUCTION

ROBERT MONTGOMERY BIRD was born in Newcastle, Del., February 5, 1806. His education, begun at Germantown Academy in Philadelphia, was completed at the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania, where he was graduated in April 1827.

It is doubtful if he engaged in active practice for any length of time. In the first place, he was more interested in the theory than in the practice of his profession. Medicine, moreover, was not his first love; that was literature, particularly dramatic literature. There must have been early attempts at playwriting while he was still a medical student, for some of the fragments he left certainly precede his earliest complete play, dated June 1827.

None of the first six plays that Bird wrote were produced in his lifetime. Four of them were written in 1827, the year of Bird's graduation from Medical School, the fifth in 1828, and the sixth in 1830. Five of them were written without any prospect of production, the sixth was written for Edwin Forrest. This play, *Pelopidas*, was never produced. When Forrest read it he found that the leading rôle was not sufficiently outstanding. Nothing daunted, Bird turned to another subject with a rôle better suited to Forrest, and the latter produced *The Gladiator* at the Park Theatre in New York on September 26, 1831. It was immediately successful, and Forrest carried it in his repertory for several years.

Bird followed this success with *Oralloossa* and *The Broker of Bogota*, his best work. Shortly after the production of the latter play, the playwright and the actor parted company. Forrest refused to live up to an oral financial agreement, which had been made at the beginning of their association, and Bird, receiving practically nothing for his work, could not make a living writing plays.

Still the man of letters, he turned to fiction, but he was not as successful in this field as he had been in the drama. As the historical romance was then (1834) one of the most popular forms of fiction, it was natural that Bird should try his hand at it. In rapid succession he published *Calavar* and *The Infidel*, two romances of the conquest of Mexico by Cortez, *The Hawks of Hawks Hollow*, a romance of the American Revolution, and *Nick of the Woods*, a story of the Kentucky frontier. His other works of fiction are *The*

Adventures of Robin Day, a picaresque romance, and *Peter Pilgrim*, a volume of sketches.

As a result of overwork Bird had a serious illness in 1840 from which he never entirely recovered, though he lived until 1854. After a period of rest, spent on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Bird returned to Philadelphia where, for the next three years, he lectured on materia medica at the Philadelphia Medical School. A little later he became actively interested in politics, buying an interest in the Philadelphia *North American* on which he served, moreover, as the literary editor. This and numerous other activities, too many for his own good, occupied him until his death. Bird wore himself out at forty-eight because it was almost impossible for anyone to make a living by writing in America at this time.

While Dr. Clement E. Foust was working on a thesis on Bird, he discovered that the latter's grandson, Mr. Robert Montgomery Bird, had the manuscripts of Bird's plays along with other valuable material. Mr. Bird later presented the entire collection to the Library of the University of Pennsylvania.

When Dr. Foust published *The Life and Dramatic Works of Robert Montgomery Bird* in 1919 he printed four of the plays, *Pelopidas*, *The Gladiator*, *Oralloossa*, and *The Broker of Bogota*. The last named play had been printed originally by Professor Arthur Hobson Quinn in his *Representative American Plays* published in 1917.

Because of the necessity of keeping the volume within a reasonable size, Dr. Foust had to confine himself to the later plays which are, of course, the best. After this selection there were left in manuscript four complete plays and some fragments. One of the unfinished plays and three of the complete ones are here printed for the first time. The fourth complete work, *The City Looking Glass*, was published by *The Colophon* in 1933, edited, with an introduction, by Professor Quinn.

The most important of the unfinished plays is *'Twas All for the Best*. Technically a fragment, it is practically a complete play, needing perhaps only one scene for a conclusion. For this reason and because it is the earliest of the plays to be dated—May 1827—it is printed here. A conventional comedy of manners which has for its plot the complications arising from the adoption of a young girl by an English gentleman, *'Twas All for the Best* has no particular value in itself. It does show, however, that Bird was making rapid progress as a practical playwright.

The other fragments, *Giannone*, *Isadora*; or, *The Three Dukes*, and *The Fanatick*, are in various stages of composition; none goes beyond the third act, though there are rewritings of the acts in several instances. Sometimes

Bird made major changes, sometimes he merely altered several lines. The general condition of these fragments makes it impossible to say how the plays would have been developed except that all of them were intended as tragedies. There is little doubt that these pieces were written while Bird was a student, for they are the work of one who has ideas but does not know where they will lead. He probably found it impossible to finish any of them because he had no real plots. *The Fanatick* has a particular interest for the student of American literature, as it is based on Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland*.

Of the three completed plays here printed,¹ two are tragedies and one is a comedy. *The Cowled Lover*, dated June 1827, is a tragedy modeled on *Romeo and Juliet* with this difference: both hero and heroine are killed by the latter's father who is still alive at the end of the play. *Caridorf*, August 1827, is an even gloomier tragedy, ending in the hero's suicide.

The completed comedy, *News of the Night*, is a more ambitious work and a better play than either of the former. Though the manuscript is not dated, the internal evidence points to its having been written in the same year as the others. The play is a farce comedy worked out on the lines of the usual complications, with escapes at the right time to keep the plot moving and misunderstandings between two sets of lovers. It had its first presentation on November 2, 1929 when it was produced by the Columbia Laboratory Players at the McMillin Theatre, New York City.

It will be observed that these four plays were written in one year, all of them probably between June and December 1827. It seems to me that this is a remarkably good collection of plays, even though they are apprentice work, to have been written in six months by a young man of twenty-one just out of a medical school.

The present collection, along with the plays printed in Foust's study and the single play edited by Professor Quinn in 1933, makes available every important play written by Bird. I think that the following table of plays with place and date of production will be of use to the student of Bird:

'Twas All for the Best

Not produced

The Cowled Lover

Not produced

¹ The text here printed follows the MS. of Dr. Bird with few exceptions. It was the custom of the time to use dashes in addition to the usual punctuation marks. Because Dr. Bird used the dash excessively and for no definite reason, I have omitted it throughout the text where there is another mark of punctuation. Likewise, the exclamations "Oh" and "Aye" have been given in their modern forms, and the names of characters are printed in type established as standard for this series rather than in the type used by Dr. Bird. For the same reason the use of brackets does not exactly accord with Dr. Bird's usage.

Caridorf

Not produced

News of the Night

McMillin Theatre, New York, November 2, 1929

The City Looking Glass

Irvine Hall, Philadelphia, January 20, 1933

Pelopidas

Not produced

The Gladiator

Park Theatre, New York, September 26, 1831

Oralloossa

Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, October 10, 1832

The Broker of Bogota

Bowery Theatre, New York, February 12, 1834

E. H. O'NEILL

University of Pennsylvania

THE COWLED LOVER

Projectis insignibus, annulo equestri,
Odoratum caput obscurante lacerna.

—HORACE

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■

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MORANDI, *father to Rosalia, and enemy to Raymond*

RAYMOND, *an unfortunate and impoverished gentleman, in love with Rosalia*

VINCENTIO, *enemy of Raymond, in love with Rosalia*

FLORIO, *foster brother and vassal to Raymond*

CARLO, *servant to Vincentio*

TWO MEN-AT-ARMS

GUARDSMEN

ROSALIA

URSULA

MAUDE

} *maids to Rosalia*

TIME OF ACTION: A DAY AND A NIGHT.

SCENE: LAKE COMO, IN THE MILANESE.

■

PROLOGUE

Spoken in the Character of The Tragic Muse

Men of the New World! . . . [*Aside*] *Bless me, how I shake!*
These are but men, and of a modern make. . . .
Men of the— [*Aside*] *Fie! 'tis a submissive strain:*
I'll work my welcome in Cambyzes' vein.

Know you not me? my dagger and my bowl?
My pomp of person, and my pride of soul?
Alas! my masters, I'll confess outright,
For all my ranting, I am in a fright.
Excessive horrors thicken in my heart,
O'er my flesh creep, and from mine eyeballs start;
My blood runs chill; ague's in every limb;
My poor young poet, how I quake for him!
For him!—Nay let me pass the worthless elf,
And tell you how I tremble for myself.

An outcast, I, from Europe's angry shore,
Your pity pray, your patronage implore.
Ill-used, oppressed, maligned, discarded there,
Sick, sick, the lettered doctors all declare—
I seek your country for a change of air;
And sure, Americans will not refuse
Some of these Panaceas to the Muse.
And yet I doubt, I almost fear to try
Whether your heart's as friendly as your eye.
I own I have been in the land before,
Have filled your stage with hemlock and with gore,
Invoked your favour for the visits made,
Yet found my badges all in vain displayed.
What's this! cried one, offended and surprised;
We'll have no foreign Muses natur'lized:
Indeed your foreign Muses we prefer;
But this—a cast-off exile! No,—we'll not encourage her.

Then frowns, sour looks, contemptuous silent lips,
(You are too proud to lash with words or whips.)
Satiric pity filled me with dismay,
And drove me from your frowning stage away.

Once more I come, a friendly war to wage
With scholar's pity, and with censor's rage;
To hold contention with the daring crew,
Who say your poets can write nothing new;
So beg a home for Europe's exile Muse,
And all my sorrows in your plaudits lose;
To bring before you, (as the playbills show it)
A tragic story by a homemade poet.

He, simple fool, though all conspire to damn,
Vows to remain, through all his horrors, calm:
A lying stoic, who, devoured by cares,
Thus, with a don't-care independence, swears,
This hope at least his anguish shall allay,
He wins the birch, if you refuse the bay.

NOTE: [*In pencil at bottom of Prologue*]: O what was work, your kind good-natured praise—
The common mode of damning now-a-days—
Your commendation.

ACT I.

SCENE I: *The Milanese. A hall in Morandi's castle. [Enter Carlo and Maude]*

CARLO. By the mass, wench, I think thou art ten times madder than thy mistress. Because signior Ass, my master, forsooth, has seen fit to kiss thee in a corner—a notable method of securing the mistress by gaining over the maid—thou hast seen fit to box my ears roughly for doing the same honest thing! By'r lady, I'll make love to Ursula, for this same fillet.

MAUDE. I would thy master were half the Ass to himself that thou art to Ursula. Why, knave, she will spit at you. I have heard her say, that if ever there was a well-concocted fool, a well-conceited coxcomb, a well-perfected rascal, in the world, it certainly was the knave Carlo. Fool, coxcomb, rascal! Faugh! who would kiss with such a thing?

CARLO. Why, thou wouldst, and hast done it; and Ursula would, and shall do it. The devil blister her foul tongue, if ever she spoke such scandal. Now, Maude, an' if thou lovest me, did the shrew say this filthy stuff?

MAUDE. It's truly as she ever said her prayers, and I have a mind to say it also. Why, thou dull varlet, must I kiss thee when I have no liking? Away with you to signior Vincentio, and tell him my lady Rosalia is saying her prayers, and will have no levee this morning.

CARLO. A scurrilous answer to a lovelorn entreaty. Heark'e, Maude, thou art keen after thy way. Dost not think the lady Rosalia is fooling the household?

MAUDE. Humph. There are already so many fools in the household, Carlo, I see not how they can be fooled any farther.

CARLO. Right as to that, wench. The Count Morandi is what you may call an incorrigible fool, and is more ungovernable and dangerous than gunpowder; my master Vincentio is a lovesick fool, and will take more buffets and hard words from his mistress than a dog will take blows from his master; lady Rosalia appears to be your empty, half-witted fool, that says all manner of discourteous things, as a parrot says paternosters, without asking whether they be to the purpose. But, child, does she not put on this fantastic sickness, as a curtain and vesture to some shrewd joke, without being of unwholesome health? Her eye is bright, which belongs not to a sick person; her body is plumply round, which agrees not with illness, her tongue is keener than thine own, which marks not mortification of the flesh.

MAUDE. It was never said, thou jealous jackanapes, that my lady suffered with a mortification of the flesh.

CARLO. Thou eternal dissenter against common sense! I meant not that she was dying of a gangrene! I say she looks not so ill, as she would have us believe.

MAUDE. A skilful physician! Do you not see, that although her body be round, her cheek is hollow; that her lip is thin, and her face pale; that if her eye be bright, it shines no intelligence; if her tongue be quick, it hath little method or management?

CARLO. I see all this; and know that the father of lies esteems dissimulation a virtue.

MAUDE. Out on you, knave. What end or aim can my lady Rosalia have in all this dissembling? Is it a shrewd joke, sirrah, to fall in the doctor's hands, and take physic?

CARLO. No, surely. But it is said the lady Rosalia throws her physic out of the window; and I recollect me, yesterday as I was fishing on the lake, there came a small bottle on my head, which, being broken in the fall, smelt strongly of the doctor.

MAUDE. Fie, Carlo! You are one of those same meddlesome fools, that, because you are dishonest yourself, will not rest till you can prove all honesty in others to be double dealing. So fare you well, Suspicion. My lady will not see your master. [*Exit Maude*]

CARLO. Go thy ways, for a shallow-brained woman—as willing to be gulled, as to be kissed. Sick, quotha? Yea, sick of the distemper called *ill humour*, a convenient malady, under the cloak of which, being called hypochondria, one may be peevish to friends, and gull them to the heart, without fear of their resentment. [*Exit Carlo*]

SCENE 2: *A place on the lakeside, with trees and rocks. On the opposite shores, which are craggy, Morandi's castle is seen. Enter Raymond and Florio.*

RAYM. Now we are secret. Hast had intelligence, my Florio?

FLOR. No, not a jot, my lord. I did assay
The gloomy doors of yonder hostile roof;
But found them filled with many armed men,
Who scowling on me, as I drew more near,
Bade me begone, or try how well my coat
Could stand the hailstorm from an arquebus.
Whereat I sought the cover of a copse,
And couched therein, observed that every wall,

Turret, and battlement was manned with guards;
From every loophole glared a petronel,
Arb'list, or other furniture of war;
And save by th' Orient tower, now prostrated,
And laid, a mossy ruin, on the rock,
And by the south wall, which looks haughtily down
Even from the dizzy, upright precipice,
There is no access to Morandi's castle.

RAYM. Tis well; but I've a spirit on my breast,
Mocks at all this: love has a stronger wing
Than to shrink back at what the raven dares;
And where the earthworm, or the subtle snake,
Can find a cranny, love can labour through.
Why, go to, boy; there's walled in yonder house
A map of treasure, which to look upon,
Methinks, I could outwit your Daedalus.
But to obtain that treasure!

FLOR. Good my lord,
It is the treasure of your dearest foe.

RAYM. Why, yes; I have some cause to call him such,
Since I may place the ruin of my house,
Fame blasted by an undeserved scorn,
Hopes maimed and withered, and even the future marred
In the free, open rival-grounds of life,
Mainly to the keen love he bears my person.

FLOR. I pray you pardon me: he has some cause.

RAYM. Why, I say, *Yes*, again. I did lop off
The upper branch of his unwholesome stock,
Which, I had dread, was rotten, and might fall,
Doing some detriment in its descent.

FLOR. And for this slaughter of his only son,
His dear first-born, Morandi—

RAYM. Pr'y thee, peace,
I slew the man in honourable fight.

FLOR. I know it, sir. But how, think you, his sire
Is comforted to find that it was so?

RAYM. I care not, no not I. And yet I wonte
This foeman's blood were not upon my hands;
Not that I loved, nor that I honoured him,
Nor once bethought me of the extreme pain

The act might sharpen in his father's heart;
But that he was the issue of the man,
Who calls Rosalia daughter. It may be
I seek to stab still farther the man's peace,
By robbing him of this same fair Rosalia:
And some will say so, when the work is done,
And swear, as I pass by—with fingers turned,
Following the swift wonder of their eyes—
*This is the man who slew Morandi's son,
And stole his daughter, "Good and honest man!"*

FLOR. You are pleased to jest.

RAYM. "'Tis very true; for jests
Are meat and drink to your poor gentleman."
What else should I do in this world but jest,
Who am the jest of all mine enemies?
"Boy, there's no better jest to me, than life,
With all its rare appurtenances: Thus:"
I came to being with the warlike roof
Of noble ancestors hung broad above me;
Which roof was lighted by Morandi's wit,
And the stone walls, that held it up, smote down,
Till the fierce flames had grimed and crumbled them;
And all the liquid that was showered then
Upon the ruins and hot element,
Was blood, drawn from my fairest vassal's veins.
This was a jest, an excellent one, i' faith,
And which yon walls, with their rude menial laughter
Have long reechoed at. But now, no more.
This man, this enemy, this curst Morandi,
Might if he would, cancel my proper hate,
And buy my friendship, craven that I am,
With one bright look from his Rosalia.

FLOR. It is impossible you should obtain her.

RAYM. There are many things which seem impossible,
And are, to timorous men; but men excited,
Spurred on by passion or bold enterprise,
Will work even miracles. Oh, there's a strength
Hid in this little case of perishing clay,
Can drag the ponderous mountain from his base,
Heaping him up in vasty pyramids;

Chain up the rivers into swelling lakes;
Enslave the rude rebellious sea, and make
His gulfy troughs safe highways for mankind;
Can navigate the air, and from the clouds,
Laugh at the wonder of the weak below;
Make all the elements—the diffusive air,
The treacherous fire, the subtle, restless water,
The clodded earth—the slaves and instruments
Of pastime or of profit.

FLOR. True, my lord.

RAYM. What is there so impossible in this?
Say with Morandi's blood I am defiled;
He has a heavier sin upon his hands;
Say I have been a stern and dangerous foe;
I'll prove a gentle and a loving friend.
Or must I struggle with this dragon then,
Before I gather the Hesperian fruit?
Oh, then I will, with bold and cunning heart,
So sway the fury of this stormy man,
That, though he rave, I'll keep him safe at bay,
Until his treasure is within my grasp.
"No more impossible to gain herself,
Than win her love, I tell you, foolish boy.
I am no blood-stained murderer in her eye,
No hated basilisk; but even so
A gentle nightingale, that can charm out
Revenge, the devil, that insults her ear.
Come this way, sir; and I'll unfold a plan
By which we may gain access to the castle." [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 3: *A chamber, hung with tapestry. Two recesses, containing a couch and a crucifix. [Enter Rosalia and Ursula]*

URS. Methinks, my lady, you look sorrowful.

ROS. I am aweary of this tiresome farce.
I act not well, for in the very midst
Of all my mockery, there do often come
Heart-bursts of real feeling, and salt tears
That blind me into a forgetfulness
Of all my arts. I would that I could die.

Ursula, counsel me; tell me to submit,
That, by submission, I may instant die:
Since, giving up my purpose, and consenting
To this unholy and abhorred espousal,
Will surely slay me.

URS. Be of better cheer.
I do not grieve, but rather am rejoiced
At these strange interruptions. Much they aid
The general scheme, these wild and sudden fits
Of various passion; for it is peculiar
To minds diseased, often to change their tone;
Being one time sadder than those Indian birds,
That pierce the midnight with their hollow cries,
And then more blithesome than the shrilly lark,
That wakes the merry morning with his songs;
One time malicious, scornful, and vindictive,
And then a fountain of capricious tears.

Ros. A cunning counsellor. But pr'y thee, wench,
If I should walk in this ridiculous mask,
Even for a whole long year, what good effect
Shall grow from all the labour?

URS. Why, my lady,
You shall tire out this loving gentleman;
Who then absconding out of mere disgust,
Your father shall grow merciful, and you
Live here unpersecuted, or perhaps
Find a new lover.

Ros. No, my only hope
Is that my sire, despairing of my health,
May bury me in some dark convent's cell.

URS. Nay, good my lady, 'tis not so. Your sire
Has in him that inexorable heart
Which would espouse you to Vincentio
Though you were mad; and th'rather, that he knows
His race must end with you. Your only hope
Lies in the lover: raise disgust in him,
And your salvation follows. Mum—here comes
Dame Tittletattle. [*Enter Maude*]

MAUDE. Madam,
The count your father bids you to the hall.

He has provided there a rare young gallant,
An honest fortune teller from the moon,
Who hath the pleasantest cut of countenance
That e'er I saw; and from his good guitar,
Strikes the divinest music.

ROS. Tell my father, girl,
I'd rather hear his hounds upon the hill,
Baying a stag; or the old windgod piping
Along his empty corridors. Go to—
I have a headache.

MAUDE. If you had the heartache,
'Twould cure it but to hear the young man sing.

ROS. Yes, mistress Tattle, and I doubt not, that
To have your eardrum cracked by jangling strings,
And mutilated by a fishman's song,
Is good for the vapours, and the dismal spleen.
I am at prayers.

URS. What answer, madam, shall she bear?

ROS. Tell him I've listened to our jackdaw there,
And am unmusical.

MAUDE. Well, an' if she were not
Thoroughly mad, I'd . . . Jackdaw!

URS. Pr'y thee, Maude;
My lady 'll follow: so you may report;
But tell not what she speaks.

MAUDE. Aye, marry, but I will tell,
And she may stay or come, as it likes her. Jackdaw! [*Exit Maude*]

URS. My lady, you will go?

ROS. Most sure. I long
To see a new face, and a new voice hear;
All is so stale in this unhappy house. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 4: *The castle hall. Enter Morandi, Vincentio, Maude, Carlo, and Florio in quaint attire, with a guitar.*

MOR. Some music there, Martini. Pr'y thee sit,
My lord Vincentio. Let us hear this fellow.
I have heard a lofty music on the trumpet,
Sounding a charge in battle, that I thought
As my soul drank in the shrill flourishes,

T'was music of the spheres. Therefore, I think
I do love music. Now, sir. [*Song by Florio*]

The lady's heart was full of fears,
The lady's eye was full of tears;
When there came a gay knight on the green,
And called her his sweet Imogene.

Merrily under the greenwood tree,
Hark to the moth and the bumble bee.
Spring down from the tower, lady, he said,
And laid his hand on his courser's head;
Or ever the sun shall leave the day,
I'll carry thee, lady, far away.

Merrily, etc.
 Away they flew, the gallant steed
 Outpaced the envious winds on speed;
 And ere the night o'er heaven was flung,
 Under the greenwood tree they sung,
 Merrily, etc. . . .

MOR. Such may serve
To tinkle in the ears of delicate wenches,
Or for a mother's lullaby. Methinks
The instrument is false, ha! I have heard,
The devil hates music; which is credible,
Since David wont to harp him out of Saul;
And when Tarantula, from a spider's mouth,
Creeps to the sanguine chamber of the heart,
There is no charming him away from thence,
Save by the sound of viols.

VINC. Right, my lord.
It has the same effect on beasts of prey.
As we are told by Rome's facetious poet,
Who, one day walking in the Sabine wood,
Saw an o'erfamished wolf come grinning at him;
Whereat disturbed, he straight began a song
In praise and honour of his Lalage;
Which so amused the savage animal,
That, with cocked ears, and tail betwixt his legs,
He galloped off amain.

MOR. Rosalia comes. [*Enter Rosalia and Ursula*]

VINC. Thanks, my sweet goddess. Since idolatry—

Ros. Thank your God, sirrah. We've no goddesses here.

Ros. What! darts and daggers! bleeding hearts and roses!
Tears, groans, impromptus, and hyperboles!
O pr'y thee woo me in another vein;
For these stale means are so ridiculous,
I cannot choose but laugh at you. How now?
Is this the tuneful vagabond ye spake of?

Ros. And so art thou,
Good gentleman, or may be made so.

If he bear that, she'll have him next an ass
Which is the loudest singer of anthems I know.

Ros. Why then my maidens should take up the burden;
And ere a week, the clamorous water wenches,
Crying their fish, would have thee on their mouth.

Ros. Where think ye, sirrah?

Ros. I'd have thee in a cage—

That I might sing to thee, and for reward,
Be taken thence, to nestle in thy bosom!

VINC. Yea, Rosaly; keep me encaged by day,
But give me liberty at night.

The cuckoo answers to the owl.

I wearied of thy feathery face, I'd dress
 Thy misshaped members in a coat of hair,
 Fix a red nightcap on thy head, and stick
 A little wooden dagger on thy hip;
 And when all said that thou wert monkey true,
 I'd chain thee to the drawbridge, to make mirth
 For the rude guardsmen and the traveller.

VINC. Still giving me my liberty at night.
 Why what a happy monkey I should be!

Ros. Not you, good sir. I'd loose you on the hill,
 Bait you with dogs, make cats go mewl at you;
 And finally, I'd have your skin stripped off,
 Stuffed up with wool, deposited in a niche,
 Hard by the statue of the archer Cupid,
 And with a label—*This thing was in love.*

VINC. Beshrew my heart, it would sound well in rhyme,
 Your own fair statue being placed by mine.
 Thus designated:

*First by an owl my gentle will was won,
 Then by a monkey I was all undone.*

Ros. Discourteous knight, thou once hast spoken true;
 For that's undone has aught with thee to do.
 [*Aside*] That I should be the echo to a fool.
 And bandy sarcasm! O mine enemy!

VINC. Pr'y thee observe how bitter!

MOR. What of that?
 The fruit that's bitterest in the green, when ripe
 Is sweetest. And a woman never hates,
 With half the ardour, she will after love.

Ros. Save you, young songster there, what is your name?

FLOR. Martini, please you. Shall I tell your fortune?

Ros. You shall. Now hark you, fair Vincentio;
 I love this fellow more than you, for see
 I give my hand to him.

FLOR. [*Slipping a letter into her hand*] 'Tis quickly read.
 Your destiny lies in it, written plain,
 As plain as lovelorn letter e'er could be.
 Most honoured madam, your own eyes may read
 Scribed in this little and this blue-veined palm,
 More tales of lordly love and gallantry—

VINC. Hark you, sir Juggler, drop the lady's hand.
Come, sweet, I'll wipe the filthy contact off.

ROS. Away! Your own hand has pollution in it,
Arrogance and dishonour, blood, deceit.
Knavery, and twenty other fouller things,
That make you loathly. Oh! [*Exit Rosalia, with Maude and Ursula*]

MOR. 'Fore heaven, she's mad.
The pestilent simpleton! I swear, I'm vexed.

VINC. It is insufferable. Scornful fool!
I pray you mark, that as I came to woo
This froward girl, it was with no advice
Of her rash whimsies and with no intent
Of wedding with a lunatic.

MOR. Nay, sir,
You are a boy, a very choleric boy,
She has more sense in that wild brain of hers,
Than twenty gentlemen, who must forsooth
Storm when a lady scolds. Fie, sir—go to.
'Tis but a sudden fever of her mind,
A whim; a caprice, a ridiculous humour,
Common with women, who are ever known
Shrewish for mischief' sake, and always prone
To play the fool with whatsoe'er they love.

VINC. Aye, but—

MOR. I pr'y thee have a care, young lord.
I am quickly moved.

VINC. Pray, understand me, sir,
I own that when I saw her first, I never
Spoke one so worthy of my soul's idolatry.
So wondrous fair, and yet withal so wise,
So charged with luminous and with various thought,
That the rare lustre of her beauty dimmed
In the richer glory of her intellect.
Now, though th' exterior still preserves its beauty,
A casket of resplendent garniture,
The precious contents, the mind's diamonds,
Are stolen away by that old thief, disease.
Sir, she hath naught in this fair form of hers;
Or if she hath, it is a devil.

MOR. 'S blood!

I tell you, sir, it is a fever. A devil!
 Young lord, I tell you that it is a fever.
 Have I not counselled with the friar, ha?—
 A plague upon the churl, to sicken when
 I need his physic for my daughter's sickness.

FLOR. Now, good my lords, I pray you pardon me.
 I have observed this wayward lady's case,
 And what affliction it has caused you all,
 Please you inform me when this friar comes,
 And I may do you service.

MOR. How now, knave!
 Will you thrum this—devil—out of her?

FLOR. Not so.
 I pray you when, my lord?

MOR. Why, 'tis not known.
 H' has had a twinge of gout, or gravel, or some
 Other profane disorder, which has laid him
 On his hard bed, to count his rosary,
 And groan a paternoster for every beat.

FLOR. I have held travel with a holy man,
 Brimful of wisdom and of charity,
 Who hath great power o'er many maladies;
 The which by herbs, gathered in certain hour
 Of the moon's waning, and in tangled woods,
 Aided by prayers, he very quickly cures,
 I dare to swear.

MOR. I'll stuff his cowl with ducats.
 Bring him in God's name. Why, this news of thine
 Is ten times sweeter than thy songs. Away—
 Stay— Earnest for thee, I will fill thy cup
 When thou hast brought him here. [*Reenter Ursula*]

URS. My lady, sir
 Is seized with whim to hear this stroller play.

MOR. Why comes she not?

URS. She bade me bear him to her.
 She'll have no other save myself in presence.

VINC. The devil vex this freakishness of hers.
 Why, let the fellow go, and fetch his surgeon:
 'Twere better far than thus to drive her mad
 By his foul thrumming.

MOR. Sirrah, follow her.
And you, Vincentio, pray you follow me.
Nay, he shall go, sir—I have counsel for you. [*Exeunt*]

ACT II.

SCENE I: *A remote gallery. Enter Rosalia, with an open letter.*

Ros. Mad, mad! and I shall madden, too. He here!
He lurking on my father's territory,
Whose sight were my destruction and his own!
He send a vassal to my father's hall!
He dare to write me this presumptuous scrawl,
Whose smallest letter were his death warrant!
In plain bold language, *I do love you yet*.
Ha! there's some necromantic balm in that,
Might purge death of his horrors, but makes life
More fearful to me. He will do violence;
I know him well; he has a hot, rash heart,
Whose fire oppression now has changed to fury;
And if he come athwart Vincentio,
Or if my father do but look on him,
His house's foe, his first-born's murderer,
His bane, his hate, his horror—blood will flow,
Life will be lost, and I be farther wretched!
Fly! Say you so? Presumptuous! Fly with him!
Yea, and be slaughtered with him: that's the cut—
I'll tell him I am wedded; nay, that were
A lie to stab him with.—Ha! What is here? [*Enter Florio and Ursula*]
Thou hardened fool, what madman sent thee here!
Be dumb; I know thee. Is thy throat not cut?
Methinks there's blood a trickling down thy breast.
Why, sirrah, know you not, that if there fell
An inconsiderate word from off your lip,
There were a dozen daggers in your throat?
Beware, be secret; get thee gone, and tell
Thy silly master, an' if thou wilt, from me
To fly this dismal, cross, and perilous spot.
Tell him, I know him not.

URS. O good my lady,

Compose yourself. There is no danger here.

ROS. I tell thee, wench, that there is danger here.
This headstrong malapert will quickly have
His wholesome limbs clamped tight with cursed steel;
He will eat ratsbane in his food; be choked
By mortal nightmare, in his midnight bed;
Cast in a dungeon or a well, to rot—

FLOR. So please you, lady, I have steel at hand;
And he who would do damage at my throat,
Must take heed to his own. I wait your will.

ROS. My will! I have none. Am I not kept fast
In this old tomb, as is the lifeless corpse
In his dark grave, with worms that gnaw the heart,
Worse than they gnaw the body? Get thee gone;
And tell thy mad-brained master, I'm amazed,
Angered, and troubled, by his foolish message;
I am amazed that he, once reckoned wise,
Should e'er importune an affianced woman;
Angered that he should ever dare bespeak
The daughter of his house's deadliest foe;
And troubled, lest from this there should ensue
Ruin and bloodshed. Oh, how madly rash!
Was there not woe enough before? My heart!
O Raymond! They will slay thee, if thou come.
Away, thou fool; thy master is my foe. [*Exit Rosalia*]

FLOR. God save me, wench; her wits are gone indeed.
This is no jesting.

URS. I am perplexed.
She's shocked by this most unexpected news:
Yet that she loves this enemy, young Raymond,
I am assured of: I have seen her weep
Over the ancient necklace that he gave her,
And bruise her lips by kissing it.

FLOR. She comes again! [*Reenter Rosalia*]

ROS. Come hither, sir. I bade you tell your master,
I know him not. Here is a silly bauble
He gave to me some fourteen months ago;
In truth, so long, I have forgot the time,
With all that happened in connexion with it.
Tell him, that, as I break the trinket—thus—

All fellowship or union that's between us,
Is likewise broken. I return to him
The severed fragments. For the loving bauble
I gave to him—my heart—it is reclaimed:
Henceforth I know him only as my foe. [*Exit Rosalia*]

FLOR. Why, Heaven forgive her. What a fiend is woman!
A song, a dream, a riddle! A tongue, that babbles
Extremity of folly, whim, and noise,
With no more rule than have the erratic winds;
A heart, that in all opposites of cause,
Hatred or love, still brings out like effects,
In each agreeing in absurdity!
She will not scorn him, once who loved so much!

URS. You do mistake her. Get you to your master,
And tell him, if he can by artful plot,
Make flight but possible, she'll fly with him.

FLOR. If I could think so.

URS. Can you read the soul?
This scorn and frenzy, to mine eyes, denote
Affection quarrelling with fear, lest harm
Should come to Raymond.

FLOR. Hearken to me then.
I think you faithful, good—

URS. Hist! Get you gone.
There is a footfall in the gallery. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 2: *A room in the castle. Enter Morandi and Rosalia.*

MOR. Thou willful girl—some say that thou art mad.
Is 't so?

ROS. Mad, mad, my father!

MOR. Mad, my father!
Is that an echo or an answer, ha?

ROS. There were, methinks, some blessed good in madness,
So it could drive away this hideous spectre.

MOR. Spectre! What spectre?

ROS. This Vincentio.
Nay, do not frown upon me. Frowns have been,
Of late, so frequent with you, my dear father,
I've almost lost acquaintance with your smile.
Pr'y thee cast off that angry cloud, and smile;

For my heart's full, and I would rather shed
Some tears of thankfulness than disappointment.
Bless me, my father.

MOR. Bless you, girl, indeed;
I bless you from the bottom of my soul.
Rise up, sweet simpleton.

Ros. Nay, nay my sire:
The blessing that I ask is more than words.
Send you this bad Vincentio away:
No noxious snake, nor venom-spotted toad
Is viler or more horrid in my eye.
If you do thirst to make your son of him,
Do it in Heaven's name, but not by my means.
Send me to dungeons or to cloister cells;
I'll take the veil, take poison—what you will—
So you will rid me of Vincentio's presence.

MOR. The cloister! Now you mind me of a tale,
Some babbling devil whispered in my ear.
Why, you were schooled within a cloister, girl;
And this same prattling thing that spoke to me,
Said that mine enemy, hark you, girl, mine enemy,
Raymond of Alvi, had found entrance there,
And made even progress to my daughter's presence.
What! Was it so? Did you not see, his hands
Were stained to dripping in a brother's blood,
Murdered by him, most foully, foully murdered!

Ros. I have been told, my lord, it was not so,
But that this enemy, the hated Raymond,
Struck not my brother, till he, in violent wrath,
Urged him to fight, by injuries and blows.

MOR. Do not say so—or even if so, by heaven,
I do rejoice he struck him. I had done it—
Yea—but my hand should have been armed with steel,
Would force a passage through his ribs and heart,
Though they were made of iron. Answer me—
Came he to mock you, for his brutal triumph?

Ros. I once was sailing, on the broad deep Po,
That flows beneath the convent's reverend walls,
With many of the boarders, for we were
At times allowed such wholesome exercise;

When, as we passed beneath a mighty crag,
Whose head in aged palsy seemed to shake,
As if about to tumble to his base,
And drive the frightened waters from their bed;
Some start of wonder and of fear among us,
O'erturned the skiff, and plunged us in the waves.
Shipwrecks in storms have all their wild cries drowned
In the loud clamour of the howling winds,
And the maddening roar of billows, as they wrap
The ship in their constrictor folds, and crush
Its sturdy masts and ponderous oaken ribs
To ruinous atoms. But to be engulfed
In stiller waters, when the sun is up,
Shining in mockery of the drowning wretch;
When winds are dead, and the half slumbering tide
Ripples, scarce audible, o'er the pebbly shore:
Then sound the strangling shrieks, and choking groans,
In such a concert, that a man will madden
To listen to them. O my dearest father,
That hour had robbed you of Rosalia,
Had there not been a guardian spirit near,
Who sudden from the very dizzy top
Of the tall cliff, in shape a noble youth,
Sprang, spurned the waters with heroic strength,
And saved me, father—saved me for my father.
This youth was son to your old enemy.

MOR. Forever blasted be his hand. O slave!
He would have bought my mercy—but I love you less
Than I hate him; and now, methinks, the touch
Of his curst arm has made you odious to me.
He! caitiff—he! By heavens, I would myself
Cast you in whirlpools, for the chance to see him
Dare raise a hand, or eye, or thought to save you.

ROS. O sinful hatred! that can thus transfer
Its bitterness on your own blood! O shame!
Art thou my father, bloody-minded man?
Speak thus again; I'll swear 'tis not my father,
But base Vincentio that is organed in him.
You choose this villain to become my husband!
Then I demur to your authority,

Who have no savour of the father in you.

MOR. I have lost speech! What art thou?

Ros. O ye heavens!

A thing oppression will drive mad. Forgive
My wild, rash, hasty, and irreverent tongue.
Cannot bent knees, clasped hands, and tearful eyes,
Move you to hearken to a daughter's prayers?
Trust me, the knife in an assassin's hands,
Were better than the spouse-ring in Vincentio's.

MOR. Begone. I would not curse you, but am moved
To do that I were sorry for—I will not
Waste time and reason with a rebel fool.
Begone; put on your bridal robes, and—hark—
The moment this old villain monk appears,
You shall be wedded to Vincentio.
Begone. [*Exit Rosalia*]

I have been punished in my children.
Two boys I had; but they are gone. Foul death
Ne'er struck two nobler paragons from man.
One died in youth, a heaven-sent cherubim;
Too pure and frail to bide the chilling frosts,
That nip the buds of promise on the earth—
And fit for no inheritance but Heaven,
And therefore he was sent to blossom there.
The other was a brave and lusty youth,
Proud, rapt, and fiery; manly while a boy,
And godlike when a man; scornful of checks;
And with a soul, stamp't visible on his face,
That flashed like torchlight, at the sounds of battle,
The roaring cannon, the enlivening trump,
The rattling drum, the neighing of shrill steeds,
The clash of armour, and the cries of men.
He had robbed glory of her richest plume
But that the foul fiend came across his path,
And blasted him. Therefore I curse this fiend,
This human devil, and hold my life in value,
Only because it promises opportunity
To meet with him—O diabolic dog!
To meet with him—'tis all I ask of Heaven;
The rest I ask of self and my good sword. [*Exit*]

SCENE 3: *The castle hall. Enter Carlo and Maude.*

CARLO. Ha, ha, ha! Kiss me, Maude, and I'll tell thee the funniest thing. Fie, thou retrograde devil; thou art like an ill-charged caliver, that jumps you a yard back, the moment you touch it with a matchstick. Faith, an' if my lip were a linstock, and all the hot materials that are stuffed in thy little body, were flaming brimstone and saltpetre, thou mightest conceit thyself a cannon, and recoil.

MAUDE. O thou coxcomb rascal! The handsome fortune teller for me.

CARLO. Now, by the mass, I thought so; and I don't love you so particularly hard, but I can lay siege to Ursula.

MAUDE. Yea: nor Ursula you so particularly hard, but she can make love to the stroller. I saw her squeeze his hand, as she led him from the postern.

CARLO. I'll slit his throat, the small-piped dog! if he dares love both. I am as willing to part with one of you, as ever I was with a rusty doublet; but as touching both, by'r lady, I say, No. We are about to have a wedding.

MAUDE. How? When? Who?

CARLO. Going backwards, I answer to the Who, lady Rosalia; to the When, when the physicianer monk appears; to the How, by the monk himself.

MAUDE. And how know you all this?

CARLO. Thus: I ensconced in a curtain, and was doubtful lest old bully count might not put his claw on my cover, whereby there had been no end to my smelling faculty, seeing bully had cut it off; for I promise you, he is a very Vulcan in his humours, a perfect spitfire, a salamander, that thinks you no more harm of blaspheming his daughter, than I do of eating your lips: thus.

MAUDE. Go to, knave. And why so sudden?

CARLO. Come to, wench: thus. By my holidam, thou hast been eating honey and violets; for the taste of the one is deliciously blended with the smell of the other on your lips: thus.

MAUDE. Out, knave! You smell of the wine cellar.

CARLO. True, by Saint Christopher. What else should I smell of? Not orris, that denotes a foul breath; not musk, that betokens a mouldy skin; not civet, for that's beastly, being the offals of your Zibethum, your Barbary cat; not garlic, for that's a condiment to a boor's breakfast. The odour of wine on one's lips, is the only evidence of a sound body, and a gentlemanly breeding. I have learnt from that same curtain a thing or two, which can only be kissed out of me.

MAUDE. O lord, tell me without the kisses, or tell upon trust.

CARLO. I'll trust no woman farther than a kiss or a calumny; for these things naturally appertain to woman. Thus: I learnt bully count was mad, and his daughter to be married. Thus: I found out lady Rosalia has a hankering after that villain, young Count Raymond of Alvi; and thus: I'll tell thee a secret of my master Vincentio.

MAUDE. Out with it then, and let it be in my ear rather than my mouth.

CARLO. First: although he is not naturally a coward, he dreads this dog Raymond, as the devil dreads St. Michael, or I holy water, which is a liquid that was never brewed; and to tell you the truth, I once saw this same Raymond knock him soundly on the scone with his own dudgeon hilt. But then before any other man he is a perfect Hercules, and before a woman a perfect Mars.

MAUDE. Like most other men, I'll swear.

CARLO. But most unlike me, who, in my parts, go through the whole heathen mythology. In the parlour I am Mercury; in the kitchen, Jupiter; on the housetop, Æolus; in the cellar, Bacchus. In a tavern I am Neptune, swimming in an ocean of flip and grogram; in church, Silenus, or rather a martyr, since like a martyr, I sleep in the bosom of the church. In a brawl I am Esculapius, the father of broken heads; in love, Apollo or Plato, as it suits you. So also you, for wit are Minerva; for pride, Juno; for promise, Ceres; for a go-between, Iris; at flirting you are Venus, but at present you are nothing but Maude merely—thus. Hist! Away. The count! [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 4: *The lakeside. Enter Raymond and Florio with a bundle.*

RAYM. We now are private. What is in your bundle?
What token of Rosalia? I burn with strong suspense.

FLOR. The lady, sir, is sick.

RAYM. Sick at heart, sir. Did you not see her?

FLOR. I did, sir; but she was so strange in talk,
So wild in gesture, that she seemed to me,
As all report her, very nigh to mad.

RAYM. Very nigh mad with joy, thou simple knave.

FLOR. If it be joy, sir, to be humpered up
In an old castle's pestilential halls;
Spied on by dark and blood-minded men;
Urged to commission of an hateful act,
And to a love she truly doth abhor;
Why then, my lord, she's mad with joy.

RAYM. Come sir,
Give me her message.

FLOR. She sends you back this trinket, as the token
Of your love's present situation.

RAYM. Ha!

'Tis broken. What mean you?

FLOR. Sir, she snapped it off
With her own fingers, and in doing, said,
Tell me your master, *As this broken bauble,*
So is all love and fellowship between us.
Nay, good my lord, start you not thus, nor dash
The injured thing so roughly on the ground.
I have yet more to tell.

RAYM. It is enough.
I should have known it, too; for when all men
Abandon me, why should a woman love?
Come, let's begone.

FLOR. She bade me likewise say,
She knew you not.

RAYM. Thou scornful villain! Now
I know thou liest!

FLOR. Sir, do not throttle me.
I have not served you falsely in your need
And broken fortunes.

RAYM. Broken fortunes! Right. I am
A poor, impoverished man; the very wreck
Of an old rotten ship that once was noble,
But now lies worming on the watery beach;
So that a fool can gibe at me. Why, 'tis
An excellent jest, and I must laugh at it;
For that I am so miserably poor,
I cannot pay thy services with gold;
I needs must laugh, when thou wouldst have me, and
Knit hands with thee, as with my friend—
Speak softly to thee, call thee *honest brother*;
Lie, drink, swear, dance, be fulsomely familiar;
Smile, flatter, fawn.

FLOR. This cuts me to the heart:
I had rather you should stab me than speak thus.
O, sir, 'tis love, respect, and gratitude
Make me your follower; and pride, for I
Am proud to share your poverty. I am

Your foster-brother. You have saved my life,
Been kind to me in your prosperity.
I do not jest, but fear the lady does.

RAYM. Well, sir.

FLOR. I'll swear, she sent you this strange message,
Merely to warn you that there is no hope,
That if you 'tempt to see her, you may draw
Ruin upon her and upon yourself.
Her maiden told me that she still retains
Kindly remembrance of her enemy;
And oft was wont, with tears and sighs, to kiss
This poor memorial you have cast away.

RAYM. Give it me. So. Go on.

FLOR. The count, her father, as perhaps you know
Is obstinately bent, that she shall wed—
Be patient, sir, she likes it not—shall wed
Even with your bitter enemy Vincentio.

RAYM. How! Say it again. Wed with Vincentio?

FLOR. I said it, sir; and once more, with Vincentio.

RAYM. Unsay it then, for it shall never be.
Vincentio! Why, that's the thing that quakes
In an ague-fit, when one but mentions Raymond,
Chatters in 's teeth, grows bluish on his lips;
And his thin blood, afraid of being sluiced,
Takes refuge in the interior arteries,
Leaving his skin penuriously pale:
And then, bethink you, 'twas his testimony,
Begot in hatred, and expressed in lies,
Most foul, most shadowless, most cowardly,
That got me torn from my inheritance,
Disgraced at court, and very nigh dishonoured,
Save that dishonour never knew my house;
And now will thwart me in Rosalia!
'Sdeath! I could laugh to think of it, but feel
That he, who's fit to rival me in love,
May likewise be fit rival for my sword.

FLOR. There is no need of these extremities.
The lady scorns this gentleman. I saw her start,
When he but merely offered at her hand,
And with these words, *There is pollution in you,*

Villainy and dishonour. Sir, away!

With other like expressions of disgust.

RAYM. Did she so? Well, I swear she has a spirit.

FLOR. Moreover, sir, she jeered and flouted him,
Until his rage waxed into wordy tempest.

RAYM. I would to Heaven I had been present then,
To see him bluster at a saucy woman,
Who never dared to grin his wrath to man.
He is a knave, a very pitiful knave,
And hardly worth the laughing at. Go on.

FLOR. The best proof of Rosalia's faith to you
Is that she feigns—yet 'tis not all, sir, feigned—
A moody sickness, full of wildest whims,
Under whose semblance, she puts out her wit,
In many poignant and disgustful sarcasms,
Against Vincentio, till his self-love swears
'Tis naught but madness that can treat him so;
Whereby the hated nuptials are kept back.
Be of good cheer. Although she seem averse
To your untimely importunities,
I know her heart pants wildly for deliverance;
And come what may, she is prepared for flight.

RAYM. Said she so?

FLOR. No, sir; but her maiden did,
Who, I am sure, is in her confidence.
Here is the habit of a holy friar.
Wrap this about you carefully, and hide
Your angry visage underneath the cowl.
In this disguise, I'll bear you to the castle.
You are expected.

RAYM. How, sir! I expected!
Faith, boy, they'd sooner look for some rent star
To fall from Heaven upon them, than for me.

FLOR. I told them that I knew a holy man,
Dexterous in simples, who was very famous
For vanquishing all manner of diseases.
You are the man: I've told them truth in this,
That none but you can cure your Rosaly.

RAYM. Heaven bless your wit.
[*Puts on the habit*] Now see, I draw the cowl

Over my face. God save you, son; confess:
I'll give you absolution for your sins.
I am, most suddenly a holy man.
I once was vexed with many fleshly sins,
Hating my enemies; but now am changed:
I love all men and women that I know,
But chief of all mine enemy, Rosalia.
Yet after all, I am a very wretch,
Selfish, irrational, and without virtue.
I cannot guide her into palaces,
Nor spangle her with jewels. Well, what then?
What, can she feed upon a soldier's fare?
Sleep on a soldier's blood-besprinkled bed?
Or hear the storms of icy winter howl,
In some log hut, built in a forest's shade,
Starving in wretched dignity? Alas!
Even this her proud, her independent soul
Scorns less, than crouching in a tyrant's halls.
And I—I'd rather glut my palate on
A vulture's leavings, or a jackal's feast,
So that I walked as unrestrained as they,
Than feed at the oppressor's pompous board.
Freedom's a thing, a most particular good,
Heaven's chiefest blessing, and man's greatest pride,
By God given equally to all mankind;
And in his eye, the beggar's brat, that's born
Beneath a hovel, or embowering hedge,
Hath as much claim to its nobility
As the weak issue of a monarch's loins.
Ah, when Heaven stamped that bright word liberty
Within the soul, which it illuminates,
And on the forehead, which it glorifies,
'Twas with provision, that to rub it off,
To wash the righteous, godlike mark away,
Man must assume the Helot's badge in lieu forever,
Forever abject, and forever curst.
I'll free her, for her father is a tyrant.
I'll free her, thanks to this most reverend robe,
Under whose dumb and undivulging cowl
So many lovelorn stories have been told.

Let's to the spring, and in its glassy face
Take note of our new metamorphosis. [*Exeunt*]

ACT III.

SCENE I: *The castle hall. Enter Morandi and Vincentio.*

MOR. It shall be so; I have resolved. To wait
An idle girl's compliance with wise counsel,
Expectant of the ebb of obstinacy,
Is to stand gaping, like the fable's fool,
Beside a torrent, waiting till its swollen waves
Shall roar themselves away. It shall be so.

VINC. I am well pleased, my lord, most grateful, sir;
This holy monk will very soon be here,
And honoured in performance of the marriage.
And if she make some maidenly objections—

MOR. Why, we will cut them short, or strangle them
In the tight knot of the solemnity.
A plague on her objections! See you, sir,
There's no curse greater than to have a daughter;
And if she make but such a vicious wife,
As she has proved a rash, rebellious daughter,
God bless the mark—and you that take her, sir.

VINC. O sir, I'll sooth her with extreme affection;
Play such a job with all her whims and changes;
And ever as she mocks me, speak her fair;
And when she frowns, forget it, and be pleased;
And when she weeps, say such sweet words of comfort,
She cannot choose but love me.

MOR. Now you err:
This would make angels Jezebels. You must
Uphold your dignity and mastership;
And when she scowls, frown you as black as night;
And when she's saucy, sharply reprimand her;
And when she weeps, why, marry, let her weep:
There's nothing makes a woman passion more,
Than when you fondly deprecate her tears;
Nor sooner stops them, than to let them run.
How now, sirrah? [*Enter Carlo*]

CARLO. Please you, my lord, this learned monk has come.

[*Enter Raymond, as a monk, and Florio*]

MOR. Save you, St. Galens, most learned friar!

Now by our lady, I rejoice to see you.

VINC. I, too, most holy, wise, and reverend father!

FLOR. [*Aside*] Speak to them, sir. Be not wrapped in a muse.

RAYM. [*Aside*] One—both. Under their very walls!

[*Aloud*] My noble lords,

Blessings and peace be with you. I should know

The Count Morandi, by his martial bearing.

MOR. Right, honest saint. This is my lord Vincentio—

Pr'y thee uncowl. Methinks your face will please me,

As also will your name.

RAYM. I am called father Peter.

A vow compels me to conceal my face;

MOR. Away with you, Carlo. Take this knave along.

Stuff him with wine, and make a lord of him;

And see you tell my daughter's maidens, bid

Lady Rosalia instant to our presence. [*Exeunt Carlo and Florio*]

RAYM. [*Aside*] Now I could find it in my soul to laugh

At these two simple, foolish gentlemen,

But that my soul is filled with better thoughts.

I look, too, on Vincentio, and almost

Forget I hate him.

MOR. Friar, I am well satisfied to see you.

I sent for you to tie the knot betwixt

My daughter and this noble gentleman.

RAYM. How, son! I was informed it was to pray

For a poor maid that has an evil spirit!

MOR. So far your information runs with truth.

But I have taken more consideration,

Wherefrom I judge it wiser to precede

Your medicines with matrimony. See!

Behold her, father! [*Enter Rosalia with Maude and Ursula*]

RAYM.

[*Aside*] Heavenly apparition!

Something worth love there may be in that father,

However curst and odious in himself,

Who hath such argument for love as she.

There is a sadness on her—O dejected!—

The soil she blows in is too flinty for her.

There is no Heaven's dew falls upon that heart,
Can let such sweetness wither, lacking it. [*Aloud*]
You call the maid, I think, Rosalia!

ROS. Who speaks!

URS. Heaven's sake, be quiet, lady.

MOR. You have example of her delirium.

'Tis ever thus with her; often bowed down,
As if her weak shoulders failing with the burden,
Propped up a world of heavy cares; from which
Dumb sullenness, a word, a glance, a thought,
Strikes such a sudden fire within her soul,
You stand amazed at the strange transformation.
Then she speaks fast, reviles with scornful words,
Sneers, laughs, is seized with a malicious fury,
From which a word again, or glance, or thought
Will make her pass, and melt into a woman.
You have example.

RAYM. I have, and am assured
It were not less delirium in you,
To marry her in this condition. Wait,
Put back the nuptials for a day or two;
And in that time, if there be art in man—

MOR. No, not a minute. Your advice I ask
Merely in the matter of her malady,
And not her marriage.

VINC. Pray you, count, my father,
I think this friar speaks exceeding well;
For though himself may covet paradise
With not half the deep eagerness, that I
Covet Rosalia for my wife, I swear,
I think it better we should wait awhile,
And let him prove the virtue of his drugs.

RAYM. Truly, son, 'tis very wisely spoken.
[*Aside*] My voice rang like a death bell in her ear.
Ah, me! How pale, wild, sorrowful she looks!

MOR. I care not. 'Tis well, if you will have it so:
Perhaps 'twere better so. Advise me, friar,
Have you much hope of speedy cure in her?

RAYM. I cannot tell till I have questioned her.
Pray you, begone, and leave me with her, sirs:

One of her maidens may remain. I shall
 Much better see the nature of her spleen,
 When there are few to vex her. Give me leave.

MOR. We'll leave with you her favourite, Ursula.
 And, hark you, do not speak of cloisters to her.
 You start! Ne'er be offended; 'tis with reverence
 I speak of them. Yet they have done her harm,
 And still run in her mind. But, by your leave,
 I'll breed no daughters for the church's service,
 To be mew'd up, pray, sing, and rot away,
 Nature's wronged exiles; or perhaps to plot
 How all the saints and saintly sisterhood
 May be made fools of, and themselves outwitted
 By those they scheme with. I'll no nun of her,
 However to the veil she may incline:
 Therefore I say, speak not of cloisters to her. [*Exeunt Morandi, Vincentio and Maude*]

Ros. Who's that called on Rosalia?

RAYM. [*Throwing back his cowl*] Her enemy.

Ros. Ah, heavens! begone, thou tenfold madder man
 Than ever dared the wrathful lion's den!
 Methought that when I heard thy voice cry out
 There was a dead man spoke.

RAYM. Not thou, sweet Rosaly. I pr'y thee wear
 No more that look of terror. Have I grown
 Abominable in exterior,
 Since I put on this bachelor masquerade?
 If so, I'll doff it, and walk forth myself—
 Raymond of Alvi, in Morandi's hall!

Ros. Yea, simple, headstrong, daring man, and then,
 A moment after, bleeding from the tracks
 Of twenty sharp and angry sabres, lie—
 Raymond of Alvi, on Morandi's floor.

RAYM. Come, gentle Rosaly, no more of this.
 Time is too precious, and this opportunity,
 To be misspent in fruitless disputation.
 I am your father's enemy, not yours;
 And for your sake, I do remit to him
 Many sour taunts and grievous injuries,
 The ruin of my family and state,

The slaughter of my vassals, and—myself,
In case you so may think him justified.

ROS. What do you here?

RAYM. Can you not answer that?
I come to play the robber with you, and steal
Your father's dearest treasury away.

ROS. Touch me not, Raymond, for methinks the blood
of all my ancestors comes to my heart.

RAYM. And if it did, I have a claim upon
Every and each particular red drop,
That claims your house for its cogenitor;
And if they all are gathered in your heart,
I swear I'll have them, to appease and glut
My most insatiate—love.

ROS. Go to, go to.
I am your enemy, and would your life,
But that I know you value it so little;
You once even ventured it for mine. And now
It must be very worthless in your eye,
Thus to be staked upon a powdered mine,
Which every minute may blow up.

RAYM. You are right:
I do not value it a copper coin,
When weighed, in love's beam, 'gainst my Rosaly.
Since the day that I dragged you from the grasp
Of the old amorous Po, I have, however,
Held it in some small estimation. Now,
I mean to double my respect for it,
By saving you a second time.

ROS. From what?

RAYM. From what? Why, from this curst Vincentio;
A man whom to proclaim in all his merits,
Would so far bear me in condemning speech,
As make me seem a slanderer, which I am not.
Trust me in this, that he is mischievous;
Quickly offended, and, offended, vengeful;
Subtle and uncompanioned in his plots,
And therefore apt to be successful; glossing
His treacherous thoughts with gay and sprightly manners,
As one that thought not too much; complaisant,

Accommodative to another's humour,
As all designers and true courtiers are.
An' if you wed with any man but me,
I'd have you choose some honest gentleman.
I'd save you, 'sheart! were it against your will,
And if you will not willingly escape,
I'll force you off, I swear I will, Rosalia.

ROS. I did not choose this hated popinjay,
Not I; I had no voice in his election;
And sure am I, were he a gentleman,
Of honourable thought and dignity,
He 'ad long left off his importunities,
Since that I always treated him with scorn.
Nor can I look more tenderly on you,
My father's foe, whose hands are deeply stained
With my half-brother's blood.

RAYM. He forced me to it;
And though my hatred had not then been quenched
By the deep love I after bore to you,
I struck not at him till, for my forbearance,
He called me coward, and smote me in the face.
Then, to be sure, I did reply to him,
And slew him.—Does this rankle in your heart?
Why, then it is that same bad family blood
That heats a passion in your heart, and not
That dear heart's own suggestion.

ROS. Alas, alas!
I know not how; I wonder at myself;
I fear 'tis sinful, thus to hear you speak,
And not reply with hatred's bitter voice;
To let my hand be held in yours; ah, me,
It is unnatural.

RAYM. Not so; for love,
When honest, never is unnatural;
'Tis Heaven's kind ordinance, which, looking wroth
Upon our houses' more unnatural hate,
Would, by this passion raised between us two,
Melt down our furious and destructive swords
Into firm links of everlasting friendship.
What but Heaven's interposing power could urge me,

Could move my soul with curiosity,
To see what kindly blossom e'er could spring
From such a rugged and a cankered stock.
I saw, and loved; I loved, and saved thy life;
I saved, and was beloved.

URS. Put down your cowl, my lord.

Signior Vincentio returns.

ROS. Then, as Heaven shall look kind on me, young lord,
I do absolve, forgive, and will forget
All former evil you have done to us.
O sir, be cautious that you be not known;
And pray you, leave the castle very soon,
There is such peril round you; do not bear
Your head so high and haughtily, but stoop down;
Tread not so proudly, totter in your walk,
And seem to rest you mainly on your staff;
Disguise your voice; and sure you wrap your cowl,
Until even daylight cannot see your face.
Fare you well, Raymond—O mine enemy! [*Exeunt Rosalia and Ursula*]

RAYM. Enemy! There's a magic in the name,
Since I have coupled it with Rosalia,
That makes me love it. Enemy indeed!
I love the word, but sicken at the thing.
I would be friends with them. Friends with Morandi!
There is no rationality in mind,
No straight consistency, nor forward course
Of aim, or resolution, or desire.
Water's not half so changeable as mind:
For, as the wind, the rain, the little leaf
That drops by age from some decrepit tree;
The stone cast in it by a schoolboy; the big ship;
The downward tides of rolling rivers; the springs
That bubble up from its mysterious bed;
The daily heat that rarefies its parts;
And twenty thousand other nameless things,—
Do fill it with forever changing trouble,
Eddies, and agitations, and rude waves:
So, passions multitudinous, and thoughts
That have no limitable list, within;
Without, innumerable circumstances

Of good or ill, distressing or delightful,—
 Make one the mind forever differing change,
 Each change the property and heritance
 Of nothing longer than a second. Fools,
 Motes, feathers, straws, or weathercocks we are,
 The fools of passion and imagination,
 The slaves of chance, occasion, time and change.
 The warrior, that with fiery sword gives vent
 To veiny torrents on the field of blood,
 Lavish of all lives that are not his own,
 Grown timorous, mounts the bar, and advocates
 Wherefore some worthless villain should not die;
 The ambitious man, that shook the potentates,
 Till their thrones tottered, and their kingdoms quaked,
 Ambitious of a different world, shrinks down
 To a little cell, to scheme and plot for Heaven;
 The monk himself, weary of stripe and cell,
 Forgets his Heaven, to revel in the world;
 Spendthrifts will change to needy misers; poets
 Give up the liberal honour of their art,
 To make obeisance at the rich man's door;
 Sworn friends, for some poor trifle, break their oaths,
 Their friendship hatred; and a fool like me,
 Won by a smile, a sigh or two, not louder
 Than is the rustling of a violet,
 When its swollen cups are pouring forth their odour,
 Grow' lovesick with an enemy! [*Enter Carlo*]

CARLO. Reverend father,
 My lord Vincentio prays to see your worship.
 He waits you in the adjoining corridor.

RAYM. I'll follow.

CARLO. [*Aside*] Well then, I must jog off, though by the mass, I think
 this same's a strapping lad for a mortifier of the flesh; and methinks, as he
 turned, there showed under his black cloak, a lusty calf, that might well say
 father to the ox. [*Exit*]

RAYM. There is
 No angel in my heart that pleads for him;
 No amnesty can favour him, nor bury
 His shameful wrongs in the forgetful grave.

Yet, for a little, I must bear with him;
And now for *Benedicite*. [*Exit*]

SCENE 2: *A room in the castle. Enter Florio and Carlo, with wine.*

CARLO. Sit thee down, brother Martini; and we will be on the sudden very religious; for this flagon contains what Bernardo, the butler, calls the blood of the martyrs.

FLOR. Truly, good fellow, it seems to me the blood of the grape.

CARLO. And truly it is so; but not therefore the less the blood of the martyrs, seeing that no mortal grape gives up his juices, till they be squeezed from him in the martyrdom of the wine press. And now I pr'y thee, my excellent dear fellow, take up your chattels, and sing me a melancholy song.

FLOR. Melancholy? And why melancholy, brother Merry?

CARLO. Because, most musical Martini, I love those things which are most contrary to myself, to wit: I am a most cool, temperate man, see you, [*Drinks*] and love hot, intemperate liquors; I am by nature constant and faithful, and I love women; and so also, being of a merry humour, I must perforce love melancholy things, of which a melancholy song is the nonpareil, seeing that it gives one an appetite for a thing that's better.

FLOR. And what's that?

CARLO. Dinner. Now I pray you, sing me the doleful Elegy on the Famished Beggar.

FLOR. I know it not.

CARLO. Then you know not that will draw tears from a dog's eyes. I remember me, it ran somehow thus:

And why are the crows and the buzzards aloft?
And why do the dogs all howl?
'Tis because he has starved, poor Timothy Croft,
And the devil has gotten his soul.
Each buzzard, crow and dog,
For his carcass is agog,
Sing heigh-ho, niddy, naddy, noddy:
If the devil—fill the bowl—
Has a claim upon his soul,
Why they have a claim upon his body.

Pr'y thee honest brother, what dost thou with that plaything on thy thigh?

FLOR. I wear it to appear valiant, which heaven knows I am not, except upon occasion, when I would browbeat a greater coward than myself.

CARLO. Thou art like many of the warlike spirits of the present day; of whom one, being determined to fasten a deadly quarrel upon another, was

thus answered: *Sir, had you not known I was a coward, you had never dared to challenge me.*—There is a crust of blood on the guard of it.

FLOR. Aye. I once stabbed a gentleman's dog with it, that mistook me for a beggar, and barked at me.

CARLO. Your master has an excellent stout leg.

FLOR. My master!

CARLO. I mean, your father.

FLOR. My father!

CARLO. Oh, plague on you, you echo at me, like an empty house. I mean your ghostly parent, father Peter. He has a notable thick calf; and here's to its health. It is fashionable now to toast calves—your human calves, brother. I am sure I have toasted my master a thousand times.

FLOR. Meaning Signior Vincentio to be a calf.

CARLO. That is carrying my meaning beyond the mean of discretion, and is in fact making a mean meaning of it. Father Peter wears a golden rosary, heh?

FLOR. I know not; I never saw it.

CARLO. Nor I. Here, drink, you soapstone, you oilcloth, that will hold you a drop of liquor for hours before soaking it in; and then make as much work with it, as if it were physic. Father Peter was a soldier in his young days, I think you told me.

FLOR. I told you no such thing.

CARLO. And neither you did, now I think better on it. [*Aside*] There is no more to be got out of him, than out of a poor-box or a beggar's pocket; but if I see not deeper into this cowled doctor's box of simples, set me down for a simple jack. As for this peevish vagabond, he must be made drunk; and then he will chatter like any magpie over a prayer book, or an old woman over her grandmother's snuffbox. [*Aloud*] Along with me, good pipes, you and your catguts. You must make friends with the butler. He will introduce you to a certain ocean, called the wine cellar, where being mounted astride upon a great butt of sack, like Amphion on the fish's back, you may sing anthems till doomsday, and even after that, if you die a true Christian. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 3: *A gallery. Enter Raymond and Vincentio.*

VINC. Good father, pardon my intrusion on you.
I have a suit for your most reverend ear.

RAYM. Thou hast a suit. [*Aside*] Nay, I'll not damn him yet,
His cup is filling, but not yet is full.
Now not confessional; for though he be

Mine enemy, malignant and abhorred,
 More stuffed with sin than was Iscariot,
 I'll no advantage of his confidence. [*Aloud*]
 Save you, fair son; what would you with mine ear?

VINC. Good father, I'll confess.

RAYM. My vow forbids
 Hearing confessions for a week to come.
 Bear up till then; let sins accumulate
 Thicker than worms around a buried man,
 So ye will bear with me, good son, till then;
 I'll give you absolution—[*Aside*] Yea, so full,
 That friend and foe alike shall say, '*Twas just*.

VINC. Methinks, most holy sir, this made disease
 Is somewhat catching. [*Aside*] Lo you, how he starts,
 And flings his muffled arms upon his breast! [*Aloud*]
 Your pardon, saintly sir; I have not come
 To vex you with a catalogue of crimes.
 I am no penitent; nor am I wont
 To tell my follies, till I'm weary of them.
 I have made rich donations to the church,
 Which give me some prerogative in sin;
 And when I die, will leave it gold enough
 To pray my carrion out of purgatory.
 I ask you, is the damsel curable?

RAYM. That's as God pleases, and Saint Christopher.

VINC. I did not know that this Saint Christopher was patron of your art.

RAYM. [*Aside*] Nor I, 'fore heaven. [*Aloud*]
 He is, fair son, my favourite patron saint,
 Whose help for this fair lady I will pray.

VINC. Father, most holy father, I have heard
 That men like you, who read in Nature's book;
 Seek wisdom in the stars, and from the bed
 Of the rich ocean pluck unnumbered pearls
 Wherewith to fill the storehouse of the mind;
 Explore in caverns unknown ores and earths,
 Strange roots, and springs impregn'd with hidden virtues;
 Distil the juices of rare plants, and blood
 Of creeping things, in your experiments,—
 Have found out many marvellous, useful secrets,
 Appertinent to physic and to magic,

Some proper for the aches of mind and body,
And some whereby the devil may be raised.

RAYM. That I have medicines for mind and body,
Is very true; but, noble son, take heed
You charge no holy servant of the church
With witchcraft or vile compact with the devil.

VINC. I meant not so. But, father, have you in
Your bag of simples, or among your charms,
Any rare drug, that hath the power to move
A woman's bosom with deep love to man?
I've heard of such, among the ancient men,
That could change hatred into fawning love.
Give me a drachm of such a medicine,
Well qualified and warranted to the end,—
I'll build a church, and make you abbot of it.

RAYM. I'll not deny that I have such a drug,
Or could prepare you such a medicine.
But, good Vincentio, these particular philters,
In hands of wicked and debauched men,
Have oft been poisons, yea, more deadly, too,
Than aconite, for they corrode the soul,
Fill it with rot and canker, that do outburn hell.
Therefore, my soul is firm in this resolve;
I cannot give you them, until I know
What is your purpose with them.

VINC. Rest your fears.
I'm not ashamed to speak my purpose, sir,
Albeit I pray it be confined to you.
I am affianced to this spleeny girl,
Who has by some means, known but to herself,
Conceived for me a most confirmed dislike,
As bitter as it is unreasonable.
I'd have her love; the philter is for her.

RAYM. [*Aside*] And so I thought. What wretch! An abbot, too!
O generous, rare, and noble-hearted villain! [*Aloud*]
Please you inform me, do you know no cause
Why this young maid should view you with disgust?

VINC. Father, I speak this secret in your ear:
There is a man, a foul, atrocious villain,
A blood-stained cormorant, and soulless dog,

Who hath, by magic, won Rosalia's heart;
His name is Raymond, and the murderer
Of the maid's brother.

RAYM. Say you so? Her brother?

VINC. Her father's son, though not her mother's child.

RAYM. I doubt not, son, thou art a pious man,
A very moral, proper kind of Christian;
And when this sickness is well cured in her,
I'll serve you to the philter. Have you more?

VINC. No more, good father. Thou shalt be an abbot. [*Exit Vincentio*]

RAYM. And thou a devil, thou poor, dishonest thing,
That in thine enmity, wilt thus become
The stalking-horse and trumpet of detraction.
A blood-stained cormorant, and soulless dog!
Poor parrot, had I but lift up my cowl,
And shown how—sanctified—the look I wore,
I know he had cried Murther, and run off. [*Exit*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I: *A gallery. Enter Raymond, Rosalia and Ursula.*

URS. All is prepared; and nothing now but patience
And caution, is required.

RAYM. Good Ursula!
How shall I e'er repay thy services!

URS. Be faithful to my mistress. I have gained over
Hugo, that's stationed at the postern gate,
And for the first watch of the night is there
The only sentinel; he's sure and fast;
Has suffered chastisement, and thinks his wrongs
May be requited by his perfidy.

RAYM. What, trembling, Rosaly! and weeping, too!

ROS. Ah's me, sweet Raymond, do not chide me now;
For though my father has not borne him to me
With the soft sentiments that parents ought,
Nor does not very often speak me kind,
Yet I am sure he loves me in his heart;
And flying thus, even from his cruelty,
Especially with you, will hurt him sore.

RAYM. I chide you not, dear heart, I chide you not.
Nay, I do honour you amid your tears.
But pray reserve them, do not shed them yet;
For here, in these suspicious halls, I lose
The privilege of kissing them away.
Put on a smiling face, and seek your sire;
Speak civilly unto Vincentio,
But yet beware him.

URS. Give me leave, my lord,
You are too much together. Some are here,
Go listening stealthily in holes and corners,
Peeping through cracks and keyholes, and are wretched
Till they be meddlesome and mischievous.
I pray you part.

RAYM. Why yes, to meet again;
Else there's no wild horse that could draw me hence.
Here is the anchor of my hopes; and I,
Losing that anchor, am a ship, cut loose
To drift, without a course, athwart the storms,
And buffet with the billows of the world.

ROS. I pray you, go, young lord, or I, I fear,
Shall grow so fond of prattling, I must needs
Be troublesome.

RAYM. Yes, when an angel is
To a weak martyr,—

URS. O, my noble Lord!
Nay, I had better reason with the winds;
Frown, madam, on this foolish gentleman,
For every smile unsheathes a dagger for him.
Why this, methinks, is not a woodbine bower,
Hid in wild woods, with sentinel fairies round,
Where lovers wont to think themselves secure;
But, I conceive, the Count Morandi's castle,
With certain scores of stern and angry men watching.

ROS. Oh, now have done. I am very foolish;
But kind words are such novel music to me,
Mine ears that drink them in, are closed against
All other sounds; mine eyes, that watch them fledging,
Like callow birds, upon the nested lip,
To outdo nightingales with their sweet sounds,

Refuse to look on other things less pleasing.

Then go, my lord.

RAYM. Aye, but not to forget
That two hours more brings us again together.
'Tis twilight now; the sun is on the set,
Taking his last peep, from the western hills,
Of her, whom, on the morrow, he'll find not
In all the gloomy chambers of this castle.
Yes, when the favouring night is fairly in,
We'll make departure from this dismal place.
Be cautious but till then, my gentle dame;
Meanwhile, I'll put me on a solemn air,
And with my arms thus platted on my breast,
My head cast down, I'll roam the castle through,
And meet suspicion with my sanctity. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 2: *A hall in the castle. Enter Florio and Maude.*

FLOR. Sweet damsel, can you tell me where I may find my father Peter?

MAUDE. Not I, good youth; but an you'll sing me a song, I'll seek him for you.

FLOR. Indeed I am in such haste to find him I cannot sing; but I will kiss you.

MAUDE. Out upon you; now that's an old song of yours, I warrant you. Pr'y thee, don't be in such a terrible hurry. I was going to say—

FLOR. That an old song is never without a burden; or that a duet always has a first and a second. I' faith, I have no more time, than just to kiss you again. [*Exit*]

MAUDE. The sweet fellow! Carlo is a mere vinegar flask to him. [*Enter Carlo*]

CARLO. By'r lady, Maude, an' if you kiss so loud, I'll screw you to the great gate for a petard, and blow the walls down. Now show me the corner where this knave didn't kiss, and I'll tell you a secret.

MAUDE. He did but touch my cheek.

CARLO. Have at your lips then, thus. You will see that same bagpipes villain, before his kisses are well-nigh cold, dancing a fandango over the battlements, for all the world just like a showman's puppet, with the string that moves him fastened to his throat.

MAUDE. I'd be sorry for it from my soul, only I don't believe it.

CARLO. Nevertheless it is true, very true; for I have seen—but that's a secret as unfit for a woman, as a lover for an old maid,—seeing the secret and

the lover would set them severally mad till they had shown them to the whole world. Again: you will see father Peter, who is the father of lies, reeling it at his side; that is in your true Irish reel, your airy measure. Pray where is the Count, and signior Vincentio?

MAUDE. In the courtyard.

CARLO. Why then fare you well. There be many things hid under a cowl, that men dream not of; sometimes a raw bone skull, sometimes a thick one, and sometimes an empty one; sometimes a red cheek, a fiery eye, and a moist lip; and sometimes the very devil. Hast an almanac? Methinks the world is near the last day; for there are devils abroad, and men must look to themselves. Fare you well; and for a blessing, fare thus always—for although kissing be the hottest, it is certainly the thinnest fare in the world to anything but a dyspeptic lover. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 3: *The Courtyard. Enter Morandi and Vincentio.*

MOR. You say you've seen this wretch?

VINC. I have, my lord;

I met him once even in the throng of court,
Where, to speak truth, he held some little notice,
And was reputed for a valiant man.

MOR. That reputation was a lie. His valour is of
That brutal and disgustful kind,
Which most abounds in men of coarse condition;
Insensibility, not strength, of soul;
Ferocity, not intrepidity;
Such as may make an excellent good assassin,
A hangman, axe-man, or Inquisitor,
But never makes a soldier.

VINC. That he
Does lack the spirit of a gentleman,
Is proved in this, that for a bitter wrong,
Done me in presence of a thousand courtiers,
He scornfully refused me reparation.

MOR. 'Twas like him, sir;
A shuffling, base, malignant braggadocio.
What was that wrong you spoke of?

VINC. Good my lord,
He gave me many vile, insulting words,
Such as a quarrelsome groom gives to his fellow;
And then, because—(it was a public place,

And in the precincts of the royalty,)
I bore me calm and cautious in reply,
He stooped himself to manual menaces,
Snatched up a dagger that was lying by,
And had struck me, but—

MOR. Did you not stab him, sir?

VINC. I told you, sir, 'twas on the Palace grounds.

MOR. No matter, sir, had it been in the Church,
Under the crucifix, in the midst of mass—
Hark! who goes there? [*Enter Carlo*]

CARLO. Your servant, sir; God save you.

MOR. Why, how now, fellow! What's in thy knave's pate?

CARLO. Something, sir, that should be upon my tongue,
But that I fear 'twill move you.

MOR. What, my daughter!
I know thine errand, fool; she has grown worse,
Despite this villain monk's assurances.

CARLO. This villain monk indeed, my lord; but
For my lady, she's well.

MOR. Why then the rest is well. But soft,
What said you of the friar? Briefly, sirrah.

CARLO. To please you, sir, I walked—Hist!
What was that?

VINC. A stone that toppled from the wall. Go on.

CARLO. As I was saying, sirs, I lately walked
In the south gallery, where I chanced to meet
This father Peter.

MOR. Well, and what of father Peter?

CARLO. A sudden wind that brushed along the passage,
Blew his long skirts aside; whereat I saw
A leg—no wise remarkable, save that
It was in too good keeping for a friar's;
A notable stout calf, and brawny knee,
Glittering with golden buckles.

MOR. Out on you!
These baldhead friars feed their body well,
And have more gold within their niggard walls
Than many wot of.

CARLO. Please you, sir my lord,
I wondered not so much at these, as at

The glancing scabbard of a rapier,
Which lay along his thigh.

VINC. You were mistaken; friars bear not such.

CARLO. Pardon me, sir. I may have been mistaken
In that the weapon was a rapier.
I know not that; it may have been a sword
Of double usage: I cannot say, because
The breezes that betrayed it for a moment,
Hid it again most briefly.

VINC. Sir, my lord,
You seem not listening to this fellow's words.

MOR. Pr'y thee, be silent.

CARLO. My lady, sir, your daughter,
If I remember me, was wont to wear
At times a very curious jewel on her neck.

MOR. She did; she got it, as she told me once,
Of a young boarder in the convent with her.
What of that, knave?

CARLO. As Heaven shall bless me, sir,
I saw that jewel on this friar's neck.

MOR. Thou liest, foul dog.

CARLO. Sir, kill me if I do.
I had concealed behind the pedestal
Of old Saint Andrew's half demolished statue;
And as this Peter passed me, he threw up
His gloomy cowl, and gazed upon the image,
Giving display of all his countenance.
I saw the necklace, sir.

VINC. His countenance?

MOR. Thou slow-tongued villain! Speak, or I will tear thee.
Villain, who was it?

CARLO. Good my lord, it was
Raymond Count Alvi.

VINC. Ha! How knew you him?

CARLO. I saw him, when he struck you with your—

VINC. Dog!
My lord count are you thunderstruck?

MOR. Ha, ha!
'Fore God, the veriest madcap and wild fool,
That ever thrust head in the lion's jaws!

VINC. My lord!

MOR. He's come into the rat-trap, and I'll tease him
Even as a cat teases a rat. Go to—
My daughter's necklace! Curse her—and she knows
This bitter villain, I will have her blood.
Cast forth all meats that are prepared today—
Death! has my daughter taken of his drugs?
Hasten, forbid it!

VINC. 'Tis too late for that;
What did he in the Convent, but to drug
Her mind with poisons?

MOR. 'Tis a lie too gross:
She hates him. By the Gods, she shall be near him
When he is racked; and if, when his bones crack,
And his wrenched sinews burst, she do but groan,
I'll—No, I do not think that I could kill her.

VINC. My honourable lord, I pray you now,
This quarrel's mine: I have to thank the man
For his good courtesy.

MOR. Why sir, you prate!
'Sdeath! I'll defend the villain with my blood.
There's not a man, no, not my dearest friend,
Shall harm this wretch, but at his body's peril.

VINC. I pray you, sir—

MOR. I pray you peace, young lord.
What, he has pulled your nose, or spat upon you,
Or called you *Rogue*! But he has killed my son!

VINC. I'll not oppose you, sir. But be advised;
Let me stand by you: this same man is famous
For desperate skill and practice in his weapon.

MOR. What, would you have your enemy a boy,
To punish him with rods? The fanged wolf
Makes nobler sport for hunters than the hare:
He's a true man, who'll have his foe a lion.

VINC. The lion rend thee then, thou obstinate fool.
He would rip out your heart. [*Aside*] But he is mine.
It does not suit me thou shouldst perish yet. [*Aloud*]
Sir Count, this man's contract' to meet with me
In the North Gallery, half an hour from this.

VINC. Yea, gulled fool,
Go seek him in the northern gallery,
Or in the donjon, or on the battlements;
I seek him in the Hall; tomorrow, thou
Mayest look for him in hell. Preposterous fool!
I ask love medicines of him! Come, dog,
Away with me to the Hall, the Hall! [*Exeunt*]

RAYM. Good Florio, vex me not with these dark hints.
Your jealous vigilance has ta'en alarm
At some chance speech of this unmeaning babbler.

RAYM. It is too early:
The night is scarce yet in; and it were death
To be precocious in our enterprise.
Grant that this villain did suspect us, sir;
Before his confirmation's stablished, we are gone.
I do but wait till night has gathered darker,
And till I've spoken with Vincentio,
Who meets me here.

FLOR. Let's walk aside, my lord.
By heavens, they steal along yon corridor,
Like two conspirators, so grim and stealthy,
Their footsteps scarcely audible. [*Excunt. Enter Vincentio and Carlo*]

Age is not marked so much by numbered years,
As by the alphabet of lines and wrinkles,

And th' outward letters of decrepitude.

My life—

VINC. Is finished. [*Stabs at him. Exeunt Carlo and Florio, fighting*]

RAYM. Ha! What's this, my son?

VINC. The second's better. Die, thou dog of Alvi!

RAYM. Marry, not yet. [*Throws off his disguise; engages, and prostrates Vincentio*]

Infamous recreant!

Think of heaven's mercy; man has none for thee—

Call up a prayer, and die. What, dost thou shake!

Look at me, coward, look me in the face,

And die of thine own pitiful terror rather

Than by my honest steel. [*A shriek within*] That voice! I am foiled.

I'll be with thee anon. [*Exit*]

VINC. Accursed fool!

Weak-handed, clumsy fool! 'Tis I, am foiled. [*Reenter Florio*]

FLOR. I think I've finished him. Ha, traitorous coward!
Have at thy gentleman's throat.

VINC. Ho there! Thou villain!

[*Enter Morandi and Carlo. The three assault Florio, and transfix him. Enter Ursula*]

MOR. Where's the dog Raymond?

VINC. Fled, fled like a dastard,
Here through this passage.

MOR. No, not this, by heaven;
I entered by it.

VINC. Here.

FLOR. He lies, he lies.

Raymond of Alvi never fled from man.

CARLO. Good youth, die mannerly; be somewhat civil,
And I will don these very righteous robes,
And give you unction.

MOR. Away! There's nothing done,
Till Raymond's heart is crushed beneath my foot.

[*Exeunt Morandi and Vincentio*]

CARLO. Good pipes, now raise us up a dying song,
And like a swan make your departure hence.

URS. Begone, rude man; let him depart in peace.

FLOR. I pr'y thee, maiden, loose this belt, and let
The life run faster. There's no value in it,

When villains prosper. Save my master, girl,
My foster-brother—I am sick to death. [*Dies*]

URS. O dismal day! What was thy lord to thee?
The best half of his soul lies perished there.

CARLO. Yes, there he lies, with three as pretty holes
Pinked in his doublet, as the sun e'er saw.
Mine was done fairly—on the back.

URS. O villain!
Slave, murderer, traitor, tiger!

CARLO. Now you're angry,
And look extremely formidable. Mass!
Go rail thus at Morandi and Vincentio.
I did but as they bade me. Come, assist me
To drag this carrion to his burial place.
[*Exeunt, with the body*]

SCENE 5: *Rosalia's chamber. Enter Rosalia, in haste, leading Raymond.*

ROS. O luckless man! Hist! What wild yell was that?
They come. O Heaven, have pity! Hide thee here:
Here is the doorway to a secret closet.
O horrid sounds!

RAYM. Methinks they die away.
Where is my foster-brother? By my soul,
I love him as a brother, and had rather
My arms were broken, than that he should suffer.
I must go back: I left the boy in peril.

ROS. You must not, nor you shall not: He is safe.
Just as the sounds of conflict reached mine ears,
And my loud terrors drew you to my side,
I saw someone that madly darted out
The unguarded postern; and am sure 'twas he.

RAYM. I am glad on't. Yet, poor lad, I had not thought
That danger e'er could drive him from his lord.
I think 'twas not from fear. What place is this?

ROS. Ah, me! You call my nature to my face.
But you are safe, and only here are safe.
The castle's up; the armed guards have left
Their several posts, and with their naked swords
Stab every corner, nook, and hiding place.
This place is sacred; none will dare approach

Their lady's chamber. Hark! What sound is that?

RAYM. It is a footfall; someone here approaches.

ROS. Misery; 'Tis my father: none else dare.

Hide in the closet; here's the door beneath

This waving tapestry. There is a panel

Opens from it upon a gallery,

Thence to the hall, in time of need. Begone;

Hide thee, O Raymond!

RAYM. I'll conceal behind

The tapestry. My cross and adverse fate. [*Enter Ursula*]

ROS. Oh, what a dismal, frightful face is thine!

RAYM. How's this! What blood's this, maiden, on thy hand?

URS. Good sir, fly, fly—it was his last word—
Save my master.

RAYM. Whose last word? My Florio's?

Great God! I read affirmative in thy face!

Who did the dastard deed? Unhand me, lady!

Shall I speak soft and amorous words, when he

Is left deserted to the murderers?

Poor, faithful boy! He stood it, when I fled,

And though forsaken, was my falsehood's victim.

URS. Sir, moderate this grief, or you'll betray us.

Why should you hence? To play the shallow madman,

And tell the lion how you loved the lamb?

He is far beyond your aidance; he is dead,

Bloodily pierced by three unsparing swords,

Who was too gentle to contend with one.

RAYM. He was the last that love me, and was faithful,
And I am now alone.

ROS. Rosalia's left.

RAYM. No, no; I will not have thee share the ruin

That Heaven rains down upon my sinful head.

If thou hast any sense of safety left,

If life has not yet grown a hateful drug,

That palls like poison on thy sickening palate,

Forsake, avoid me as some monstrous thing,

Some gross, fierce plague, that carries death with it.

I am earth's outcast, outlawed by the fates,

And should be left to perish by myself.

ROS. If there were death-spells in thee, and thine arms,
Like baleful ivies, poisoned with their grasp,
I would not shun thee, I would not be frightened,
But dare my ruin, as I dare it now.

RAYM. There is oblivion of all ills in thee;
My wrongs and griefs, my passions, thoughts are gone,
Drowned in the lulling Lethe of thy lips.

URS. O now, my lord, you do forget yourself,
Think of the peril that's to follow this.

RAYM. That is to come. The future, like the past,
Has been forgotten; I'll not rake it up,
To look for sorrows, when the present yields
A treasure of joy.

URS. Rather of woe.
You are encompassed here, my lord, hemmed in,
Hunted, entrapped, the springes are around you,
Escape denied.

ROS. For heaven's sake, say not so.
The postern—

URS. Is walled up with armed guards.
I have roused you now from your soft lethargy.

ROS. He is safe here.

URS. At present he is safe.
They think he 'as 'scaped; because the coward Hugo,
At the first clash of armour fled away;
And they who saw him on his fearful flight,
Say 'twas the cowled monk on his escape.

ROS. Then he is safe.

URS. Yes, in your chamber, lady—
For ribald men, who hear the tale, hereafter,
To make coarse jests of.

RAYM. Be not moved. By heaven,
I'll make dog's meat of e'er a tongue that moves
In scornful waggery 'gainst her innocence.
Lead me away; I had rather meet their swords,
Be made a target for an hundred spears,
Than she I love be martyred to detraction.
The soldier's sword gives medicable wounds;
But there's no medicine can heal the scratch
Made by foul scandal's deadly-poisoned arrow.

URS. Where would you go? Turn where you will, you meet
Sharp lances, swords, and deadly carabines.

This casement looks down on the lake below,
A horrid depth to men of feeble nerves.

We'll make a ladder for you of strong cords
And folded garments; and when the morn is gray,
And the o'erwearied guardsmen dead asleep,
We'll let you from the chamber to the rock,
Whence a bold man may clamber to the lake,
And, plying the dark water, gain the farther shore.

RAYM. I am content: I should have said the same,
And with more truth, had mankind banished me,
With general suffrage, from society;
Exposed me in a desert, to consort
With brutes and monsters, who were, like myself,
To man abhorrent—I had said *Content*.
But being banished from this paradise
That's in thy presence, I may say—yet feel,
My lips are lying slanderers of my heart.

URS. Lady, you must immediate to your father,
And for your life, deny all knowledge of
This luckless man; I never yet before
Have seen him moved to such extreme of fury.
And you, young lord, betake you to the closet.
Keep fast till we return, I'll fetch you cords,
With which to make a ladder for escape.
A happier chance some future day may show;
But this is marred by danger, blood, and woe. [*Exeunt*]

ACT V.

SCENE I: *A gallery, lighted up for night. Enter Morandi and Vincentio, meeting.*

MOR. Furies! He has escaped!

VINC. Why God forbid!

MOR. I tell you so. Death! do you hear? He is gone:
The villain traitor Hugo—hang him, dog!
I'll flay him with hot knives—has left the postern
Unguarded—I will rack him, till his bones

Are ground to sand. They shot, the blinking fools,
But harmed him not, no not a dog of them.
He has escaped.

VINC. I could stab myself for it.

MOR. You may thank yourself for it. What, thou meddlesome boy—
You gulled me with a lie, a scurvy lie.

VINC. Sir, recollect yourself.

MOR. Now, by the gods,
If you grow angry, I will gall you more.
You sent me to the northern gallery,
Knowing this ruffian dog would not be there.
You have deceived me.

VINC. I have not. I met him
Even by chance while passing in the hall:
And my soul waxed so hot at sight of him,
My wrongs came with such fury to my heart,
I all forgot your wishes and commands.

MOR. And let him fly! Was that your fury, boy?
There you forgot my wishes and commands.
Go to—I do suspect thee for a coward.

VINC. Sir—sir!

MOR. Be still and quiet as a lamb,
Or I will have thee whipped with rods. I say,
I do suspect thee for more wit than valour—
I think this dog did beat thee, ha?

VINC. My lord,
There's no man in the world except yourself
Dare—

MOR. Yes, a thousand—I am sure of it.
Cowards grow pale.

VINC. If I am pale, my lord,
'Tis from another feeling—wrath and hate
Can bleach the cheek as well as cowardice.

MOR. What art thou wroth with?

VINC. With myself, my lord—
With fate that binds my heart in love to him,
Who wrongs me with such harsh, disgraceful scorn.
Your daughter, sir—

MOR. Aye, what of her? I had
Almost forgotten her: but I remember—

Eh—by the fires of everlasting hell,
 I think I could—if a cold slimy toad,
 Or bloated adder, should creep in my bosom,
 Hid in the downy casing of a dove.
 When full exposed, what lets that I should crush it?
 I'll question her.

VINC. My lord, I have ordered out
 A score of goodly guardsmen on the grounds,
 And am in hopes he may be taken yet.

MOR. Be it but so, and—I was rough with thee:
 Forget it—I am vexed with many thoughts
 That drive me from myself, and fill my brain
 With strange and terrible perplexities.
 Away; seize me the traitor Hugo; rack him. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 2: *The hall, very dusky, being lighted only by a few torches. Maude discovered rubbing at the floor.*

MAUDE. Not out yet! Well, there is nothing harder to wash away than blood. It sticks to the planks where it was shed, as firmly as it sticks to the soul of him that shed it; and where is the ocean that can wash it from the soul? I have tried water from the well, but that will not cleanse it; tears cannot remove it. Let them say as they will, it was foul, barbarous murder; and murder, God is slow to forgive. He harmed them not, and yet they murdered him; he sang to them, played to them, trusted his life with them, and yet they murdered him. He was a man, a fellow creature, and yet they slew him like a wild beast. Nay, I'll rub no more. Let it stand, and stare them in the face that shed it. [*Enter Carlo*]

CARLO. How now, wench. Now by this good hour which is after midnight, methinks thy little body were better in a warm bed, than up in this dismal old hall. What art doing?

MAUDE. Bitter dog! I am cleansing your filth. Look there!

CARLO. Humph! It does look very filthy.

MAUDE. Where have you buried him?

CARLO. Buried him! In the lake.

MAUDE. Wretch! Was there no earth for him?

CARLO. No. Bully Count swore not. I felt some misgivings of soul to be sure, to cast a man, like a carrion cat, into the water; but then it was the Count's orders, and I had rather eat scorpions than say him Nay. Yet what matters it where he was buried? I'm sure he'll never rise to complain of his wet grave. After all, it was a noble sight, an' you had but been there, to see

how we shot him from a brazen arbalist on the battlements, into the lake below. I believe on my soul, he took a somerset of some twenty fathom far, turning and turning like a quarterstaff or a windmill, till he plumped at last headforemost into the water.

MAUDE. Inhuman, heartless dog! [*Exit Maude*]

CARLO. Humph. A woman is an animal not unlike your industrious bee; honied to be sure, but furnished withal with a venomous sting; and he who enrages many such sharp-mouthed animals were better tramplin' on a nest of hornets. By the rood, there is something frightful in that red spot; I like it not. Holy mother! How lonesome is this old hall! [*Exit*]

SCENE 3: *A ledge of rock, with a view of the lake. A wall of the castle, receding in perspective. A lighted casement on the wall. Very dark. Enter two Men-at-arms, with torches.*

FIRST MAN. Has Hugo been seen yet, brother?

SECOND MAN. No; and I am solemnly warned the devil has flown away with him. The traitor fool! I looked for him in the wine cellar, but the butler knew him not; I asked for him at the buttery, and he was not there; and above all, I sought him among the wenches, with whom he was not to be found; and therefore I agree with you, that the devil has flown away with him; for he was a man, that, when he was to be found neither eating, drinking, nor wenching, must certainly have been in hell.

FIRST MAN. Were you not on the walls, when that rascal monk shot from the postern?

SECOND MAN. Aye; and I called out, Who goes there?—but he answered me no more than a dog; and so I shot at him; and if he had not been the devil, he were a dead man. By the lord, I had no sooner fired, than there came a stink of brimstone in my nostrils.

FIRST MAN. Aye, but it came from your carabine. Who goes there?

SECOND MAN. See, see! I smell him again, brother. Shall I shoot?

FIRST MAN. Down, down. It is Carlo. [*Enter Carlo*]

CARLO. How now, master guardsmen, are you stationed here?

FIRST MAN. No, brother; we pass by here to the barbican. We did but step back to the butler, for a cup of peculiar.

CARLO. An' if Bully Count catch you off your post, you may chance follow yonder carrion from the arbalist.

SECOND MAN. I had rather see him damned first. Come, Pedro. [*Exeunt Men-at-arms*]

CARLO. A villainous long night! Yon same Martini was a clever dog at a ditty, but a very puppy among women, a very puppy, and therefore I am not

sorry for him; though he did fight like a lion, and I was never nearer the grave in my life than when I crossed points with him. A murrain on him; I thought to have touched him the staccato, before he had drawn on me. And then this master o'mine, Vincentio; Lord, lord, I do believe this same signior dog did beat him blind, before he ran from him; and then ran, merely because he loved not playing at blindman's buff. He is exceedingly given to lying and breaking of promises; and has ruined me by bad example. *He fled me, my lord.* Fled him! who reverses the proverb, and is a hero to no one but his valet! Well and good. *By this passage, my lord Count.* Now mark the issue of a lie, which is extraordinary, inasmuch as a lie has begotten truth: *You are wrong, son,* quoth Count; *I entered by this passage, and saw him not.* Right, right, my lord, quo' maestro; *he passed by the gallery here.* And so Salamander believed him; but I didn't, for afore Heaven, I came that way myself, and no monk passed there. And where has he passed? By the postern? Now God wot, I think he who is madman enough to walk into his enemy's stronghold, and that enemy Morandi, is too great a fool to fly his knave and his lady at the first alarm. This is one of your love exploits; and your lover is generally a madman. Could it have been Hugo that passed the postern? He is not to be found. If not to be found, then he has fled: Ergo—Hist! What sound was that? A light, a shadow at my lady's window! And this but a few hours of daylight! How now, how now? What's this? [*The casement opens, and a rope ladder is let out, and shortly withdrawn*] Afore God, 'tis plain as daylight! A rope ladder! My lady's window! Aha! Then is the rat still in the trap.

Alas, poor fur, poor robber rat!

I'll straightway show thee bully cat,

An' thou hast got no other hiding place than that! [*Exit*]

SCENE 4: *The hall, lighted duskily. Enter Morandi.*

MOR. She did deny't; and yet I'll not believe her,
 For it stands strong in circumstance: the cloister,
 The shipwreck—would that she had drowned!—the jewel,
 A love pledge worn upon her heart—that it had been a
 Coal of fire to scorch her dead!
 His bold disguise—no doubt invited too—
 Let me see more. I am no common father;
 Mine honour touched, I only am a man.
 Yet I'll not rashly act, nor unadvised
 But with full proof of her unworthiness.
 Yet 'tis unnatural to think—my child,

The last that bears my name, an honoured name,
Should let it end with her in infamy.
She is no blood of mine; her mother gulled me
With some base cub of vulgar origin,
To purchase peace for her own barren womb—
Yet I'll not think so; she has ever worn
That mother's semblance; and that mother's soul,
Whene'er she smiles, seems to have left its skies,
To be in her sweet aspect resident.
I'll not believe it—'Twas some tempting fiend
Would have ensnared me. No, she shall not die. [*Enter Vincentio*]

VINC. Die! Who shall die, my lord?

MOR. I did not say it.

VINC. Methought you said—

MOR. I tell you, no; I did not,
Nor even thought it; or if I did, 'tis past,
Cast off as some suggestion of the devil,
Too dark and damning to be thought of more.

VINC. You speak in riddles.

MOR. There's no meaning to them.
What seek you here?

VINC. You, my lord Count. I pray you,
Retire to rest. These halls are damp and chilly.
This overwatching will afflict your age
With aches as yet unfelt. You are unwell.

MOR. Hast caught the dog?

VINC. Not yet; but still have hopes;
There came just now a slave with information
That near the postern was a track of blood.
Myself drew blood from him before he fled;
And it may be some of the bullets struck him.

MOR. What noise is that?

VINC. 'Tis at the gate. By heaven,
They drag him in! [*Enter Carlo*]

Hast found him, villain?

CARLO. Good my lord, they have found Hugo.

MOR. Hugo, curst dog!

CARLO. He has been wounded sore.
They found him lying in a neighbouring copse.
'Twas he they shot at.

MOR. He! And where is Alvi?

CARLO. My lord!—

MOR. Lord me not, dog, but tell me
Where is Raymond.

CARLO. My lord!—

MOR. Base kerne!

VINC. You are intemperate.
Pray you be calm, and let me question him.

CARLO. Now I can speak, sir; but I am afraid
To look on him, he is so deadly wild.

VINC. Speak, sirrah.

CARLO. Sir, this Raymond's in the castle.

VINC. What say you? In the castle!

CARLO. I do, my lord:
At least there is most strong presumption of it.
'Tis scarce ten minutes since I sallied out
Upon the cliffs; and as I sauntered there,
Mine eye was taken by a lamp that shone
In the high casement of my lady's chamber:
Whereat, amazed that it should burn so late,
Since it but wants an hour until the day,
I fixed myself in vigilance; when sudden
The shadow of a person darkened it:
Then, as I gazed, it was thrown open, and
A long rope ladder cautiously let down,
Which, not quite reaching to the rocks below,
Was slowly carried back again.

MOR. My daughter's chamber?

CARLO. Good my lord, it was.

MOR. Her chamber say you? Did you say her chamber?
Why then it is as manifest as hell.

Her chamber! Oh, what all night long!

Her chamber! Hark you:

Send down twelve men-at-arms upon the rock;
But let them do no harm at him—no, no,
Nor strike nor wound, if he shall come that way.

CARLO. 'Tis done, my lord: I was so very bold
To order men upon the spot.

MOR. 'Twas well.
Guard ye all passages towards her chamber,

But none of you dare follow. In her chamber!
Her stew, her hell, her grave!

VINC. Where go you, my lord?

MOR. To her chamber. Methinks
A father may go there. What is the hour?

VINC. 'Tis almost dayspring.

MOR. Let the day ne'er rise,
But let black night forever more endure.
The sun can't look on't,—but Morandi can.

VINC. There is some horrid purpose in your eye.
Pray you stay back, and let me take the dog:
I'll fetch him living.

MOR. Get you gone, young lord.
Choke up the passages with sword and spear;
And if he 'scape me, do no harm at him:
Take him alive.—Go, get you to your stations.
I'll no denial nor delay, young man. [*Exeunt Vincentio and Carlo*]
Ha, all night long! And in her chamber,
As with a common harlot rioting!
Hence pity, nature, and ridiculous mercy;
All weak misgivings of humanity;
All marks of man, that are not common to
The savagest beast; ye furies, arm my soul.
Earth shall not laugh at me, nor say there moved
One drop dishonoured in Morandi's veins—
Had I some slave could do the deed, and die.
No slave shall touch my—my—my only child!
That should have smoothed my gray hairs, and not
Brought them in grief, dishonour, crime, unto the grave.
Fie! There are whining devils in man's heart,
That will not let him quarrel with dishonour,
But ask its pardon, when to pardon it
Must damn the judge as being accessory.
Out, out, bright steel! And if I bleach or moan,
Sparing her heart,—be buried in my own. [*Exit*]

SCENE 5: *Rosalia's chamber. The scene discloses Raymond, Rosalia, and Ursula with a rope ladder.*

URS. 'Tis long enough, it rests upon the rock. [*Drops the cords from the casement*]

Now sir, begone. Yon streak of silvery light
Proclaims the daylight nigh. My lord, take leave.

ROS. Ah, me! it is a fearful distance down.

RAYM. Not half so deep as is the dark abyss
My soul descends to. Does the daylight break?
To me 'tis darkness that the sun shall bring.
The night, illuminated by thine eyes,
Made musical by thy soft-sounding lips,
Made odorous by every sigh of thine,
Was tenfold brighter than the day can be.

URS. My lord, give o'er; or make your parting brief,
Whilst I go down and see that all is safe. [*Exit*]

RAYM. I should have won thee, for I laboured well,
I should have gained thee, for I paid a price
I would hold cheaply with my life revoked:
That boy, Rosalia, save thyself, was all
That I held good and loving on the earth.
Of the poor few thy kinsmen spared to me,
Some fled my poverty as pestilence;
Some waxed too insolent, and when reproved,
Replied with scorn, and left me; some that would
One time have licked the dust from off my feet,
Converted from the heresy of loving
A ruined man, betook them to my foes,
And served with them against me: he alone
Forsook me not, but with obsequious love,
Shared my misfortune, penury and toil.

ROS. Let it not press upon your spirits thus.

RAYM. I would not. I would force my memory off,
Be cheerful with thee; but a heaviness
Thy bright face cannot wholly chase away
Oppresses me. 'Tis said, sometimes the soul
Has mystic warning of some fearful thing
About to happen, yet can say not what,
Betrayed but darkly by uncertain fears,
And strange, extravagant imaginings.
Methinks such warning is upon me now.

ROS. It is the grief that weighs upon your heart.
Think better, think of some more happy day.
Lurk in some secret cavern near the castle,

And trust me, I will fly to you.

RAYM. Heaven bless you.

Did I not hope—despite this heaviness—

Once more to see you, I should lay down here

The life, without that hope, so valueless.

Come, I must leave thee—not to save myself,

But to drive peril far from thee. Think not

There is pollution in thy foeman's lip:

Let me kiss off these large and coursing tears,

That thine eyes shed, in showers of transient pearls.

[*Embraces her. Enter Morandi, behind*]

How pale you grow; thine arms are on my neck!

ROS. Oh! [*Shrieks, and clings to him*]

MOR. What! damned luxurious imps! Ha! both at a blow.

RAYM. Wretch, thoughtless wretch, that stab was near to her!

Ha, what! Unhand me, Rosaly, my heart.

I will not slay him—stay thy hand, rash man!

MOR. Blasted and withered be it, when 'tis stayed.

RAYM. Nay then. [*Engages, disarms, and hurls Morandi to the ground*]

I'll carve a passage through them. [*Exit*]

MOR. [*Snatching at his sword*] Heaven blast me.

Die, strumpet, damned abandoned profligate!

ROS. O father, O! for pity heaven, what's this?

Sure you not mean to hurt me, O my father!

You shall not do this horrible, unjust thing:

You shall not—Mercy! O! [*He stabs her in the throat*]

'Tis done—done. God wash out

This most unnatural and horrid stain.

Raymond, sweet Raymond. [*Dies*]

MOR. Done! yea, truly done.

Was that my daughter which cried out for mercy?

Is this my child's blood smoking on my sword?

Is that her body on the floor? Ah's me!

This is a dismal gash on thy white throat. [*Kneeling*]

O horror! Hell, gape open for me—I [*Starting back*]

Have slain my—Do not shriek thus in mine ear.

What, do thy blue lips mutter curses at me?

And thy filmed eyeballs glare so angrily?

Not, not on me, thou horrid apparition;

I am thy father, look not thus on me:

No, not thy father, but thy murderer.

Yet do not look so piteously on me—

Hide thy foul visage, bloody sacrifice. [*He covers her with a garment from the bed*]

Hal! here's a gory ringlet of her hair

Not covered yet: I cannot look upon it. [*Covers it at clashing of swords without and cries of "Down with him! Stab him! No mercy for him!"*]

Again! More murder howling in my halls! [*A loud shriek of horror from many voices, and cries of "He has slain him! Hew him to pieces!"*]

Blood, blood! More blood! Hell is not glutted yet,

But cries, "More blood!" [*Exit Morandi, and immediately from the door behind the hangings, reenters Raymond, bleeding, and holding a bloody sword in his hand*]

RAYM. Hemmed in, but not much hurt.

Bloodthirsty dogs!

There were full ten that struck their brands at me:

But he was singled out of all the rest,

And died a dastard, that had dastard lived.

Now may they show his naked heart to her,

With one wound wider than that she inflicted.

Rosalia! Rosalia, come forth; [*Whispered*]

There's not a moment further to be lost.

The ladder yet stands fair for my escape.

What garment's this, that's lying on the floor

In such confusion! [*Lifts it up, starts, and then kneels by the body*]

Have they struck thee, too?

I did not know thy sweet blood was so red.

Thou art not dead. Come, I will raise thy head,

And wipe these big clots from thy snowy neck.

O hideous gash! What madman put thee there?

Speak, move thy lips, or twitter with thy lids,

Or touch my hand.—She is a weight of lead,

A thing of clay, resolved to clay again.

A statue carved by the Omnipotent.

O God! that thus thy images should fall,

And rot in one short moment into *piteous* dust,

When that the poorer shapes

Cut out of marble by the hand of man

Endure forever! O resplendent statue!

I'll ape the artist of old Amathus,

And love thee till thou art reanimate.

[*Enter Morandi, Carlo, and Guardsmen*]

MOR. Now!—Hellhound, perish with thy paramour.

[*Stabs Raymond in the back*]

RAYM. Well done, old friend: It was a cordial thrust,
From heart to heart. But he who has thy chance,
And must strike twice before his victim falls,
Or thrice, since the first blow you gave to me
Was through Rosalia, has a stripling's arm,
And should go stab at women. Strike again,
Thou devilish shedder of thy daughter's blood,
Innocent, luckless Rosaly. Come strike:
If that thy weapon is too dull for me,
Already blunted on thy daughter's heart,
Take this: [*Flings his own at him*]
It hath done bloody business,

As yon young popinjay can surely speak;
And, I remember, once did sluice the life
Out of the fountain of your eldest born.
What! Paralyzed! Has judgement seized thy soul?
Has God froze up within thy leprous veins
Thy thrice pestiferous blood? Well, get thee gone,
And rot—I will not harm thee—in thy living hell.
Rosalia, my spouse, we have had rare feasting
At this thy nuptials, a rare bedding too. [*Falls and dies*]

MOR. I do awake from a strange, horrid dream
Full of slaughter. Let me speak with her,
For see you, though she's very still and cold,
And very bloody, she's not dead; oh, no:
She could not die thus with my curse upon her,
She could not die before I had forgiven her,—
She could not perish by her father's sword;
None else dare strike her; no, not you, nor you,
Nor he, rash lover—no, nor I, I say;
I could not slay her—O have mercy, Heaven!
How cold and stiff! Which of you, murderous dogs,
Vile bloody cutthroats, did it? Give him me!
Eh, but I'm slack i' th' sinews and unbraced;
O then the curses of a fiercer hell
Wither and scorch his arm. It must be I,

I, for my hands are withered, and bound tight
 In clamps of burning steel, that boil my blood,
 And send it scorching to my heart—my hell! [*Faints*]

FINIS

NOTE: [*Found in pencil on inside of back cover*] If it be necessary to alter the catastrophe of this play, in order to produce the death of Morandi, it can be done by omitting part or the whole of Raymond's last speech (as now written) and causing him in a transport of fury and revenge (his old family hatred recurring with violence) to assault and slay the count—himself dying of the wound inflicted by Morandi.

EPILOGUE

'Tis glorious sport, as all allow and say,
 To roast an author, and to damn a play;
 To wield the sword of satire, high and wild,
 And slay at once the father and the child.

When summer flies, to soothe your noonday cares,
 Come buzzing music in your drowsy ears,
 'Tis natural, though cruel, I confess
 To kill the rogues for their officiousness:
 So when a poet, though it be to please,
 With idle rhymes insults your ear and ease,
 'Tis natural, though cruel, to dispense
 A quick damnation for his impudence.

Damnation! Worthy sirs, I'm not profane;
 I will not use the naughty word again:
 Yet oh, how just that word is, to declare
 An author's terror, torture, and despair!
 Sure they who coined it, must have felt the woe,
 Escaped from it's reality below.
 Yet, gentles all, let's for a little time,
 With this dire punishment compare the crime;
 See if the luckless poet merits well
 To bear a penance thus compared to hell.

To write—'tis wicked; wicked, too, to toil,
For your amusement, by his midnight oil;
Wicked to think your nobler souls will thrill
Responsive echoes to his rattling quill;
Wicked—no cannibal were this insane—
For your nice palates to serve up his brain;
Wicked—preposterous infatuation—
To dare, to court a probable damnation;
'Tis wicked, wicked, wicked, you'll allow.
And if you think so, pr'y thee damn him now.

CARIDORF;
Or, THE AVENGER

Gods! if you
Should have ta'en vengeance on my faults, I never
Had lived to put on this: so had you saved
The noble Imogen to repent; and struck
Me, wretch, more worth your vengeance.

—CYMBELINE

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■

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

CARIDORF, *a young Austrian nobleman*

JULIO, *his brother*

LUDOWICK, *brother to Geneva*

JOSCELIN }
LILLIO } *friends to Caridorf*

MARIGOLD, *servant to Lillio*

PHILIBERT, *a groom, servant to Ludowick*

BULLET, *a silly serving-man*

SCHWARTZ, *a bravo*

THREE ROBBERS

OFFICERS AND SERVANTS

GENEVA

AGNES, *sister to Caridorf*

SCENE: DURING THE FIRST ACT IN VIENNA, AFTERWARDS AT CARIDORF'S CASTLE.

■

ACT I.

SCENE I: *Vienna. A public square. Enter Lillio and Marigold.*

LIL. Sirrah Marigold!

MAR. How now, Signor Lillio?

LIL. Boy, I am in love.

MAR. With a new tailor?

LIL. Out, parrot! Neither tailor, nor new withal.

MAR. Then, my lord, if not a tailor, a woman; for naught else love you but women and tailors. If not a tailor, a woman; if not new, old; wherefore, you are in love with an old woman.

LIL. Sirrah Marigold, thou art consequential in thy consequences. I love nothing that is old, and nothing that is new, but—a woman; and truly, nothing that is so far woman, but that she may be called angel.

MAR. Aye, sir, so goes the folly of this world: there is no drab, nor greasy scullion, nor blubber-cheeked milkmaid, nor squinting schoolgirl, no ugliness in rags, nor deformity in silks, but there is some loving ass must cry *Angel!* I read your riddle: She is not old who is young, nor is she new who is an old acquaintance.

LIL. Right, young moralist. I have writ her a letter; therefore sit you down and answer it.

MAR. To give my advice in such a matter, if it be material to the matter, I would say, it were better the damsel answered it herself.

LIL. And so it would, were there not a reason against it.

MAR. The reason, my lord?

LIL. Thou ass! How can she answer that she has never seen? And if she had, she might not answer lovingly. Therefore, in this matter, do I constitute thee her representative and scribe.

MAR. I had rather be Pharisee than Scribe, sweet lord, in all matters appertinent to woman.

LIL. The wherefore, boy?

MAR. Because, sir, I were then only bound to lipservice: I could serve my mistress with my lips.

LIL. Aye, but thou canst serve thy master with thy pen. Attend. Very amorous be it, very tender, very consumptive of sighs, very lavish of protesta-

tions, and very full of jealousies and alarms. Talk of long days and short nights; of banks of flowers and scented bedchambers.

MAR. From whom, my lord?

LIL. From Genevra, sirrah.

MAR. What, Genevra, the only daughter of the ancient house of Wallenstein?

LIL. The same; a noble house once, but now impoverished and decayed.

MAR. Sir, she has a brother who is a soldier; and I conceive it to be worse than playing with fire to make light of a soldier's honour.

LIL. There you err; she has no brother; he was killed in our grand battle with the Turks, when we basted their bones so handsomely. I fought there myself, and had a cut over the sconce that was within a hair of my brain.

MAR. I am an orphan sir, quoth she;

With that she wept right piteously—

Kind sir, have pity upon me.

LIL. That is but a scurvy song. I would thou hadst not said orphan, it turns my stomach. There is shame in saying evil of an orphan.

MAR. Then it must be shameful to speak evil of the devil, for all men allow he is without father and mother.

LIL. Out on you, young profanity! Make you a parallel between woman and the devil?

MAR. No sir, not a parallel; for it is a rule in geometry that parallel lines, continued ever so far, never approximate. But I can make a sphere, whereof the circumference is woman, and the centre, devil.

LIL. If thou workest it according to mathematics, then I'll have done. Speak thou according to my scholarship, and the understanding of a nobleman. Write. Sit down, and begin, thus: *Sweet lord*.

MAR. *Sweet lord*. So! Sweet lord, will you tell me one thing?

LIL. If it be short.

MAR. Have you ever made love to Genevra?

LIL. No; but I smiled on her once as she passed me.

MAR. And how passed that?

LIL. Villainously: she regarded it not.

MAR. Have you ever writ verses to her?

LIL. Aye, boy, but never sent them.

MAR. Have you ever been in her presence?

LIL. Yes, especially in dreams.

MAR. In person?

LIL. Yes, twice.

MAR. And how did you speak her?

LIL. As an ass; my wisdom was silent. I have a horror of speaking to a backward woman. I said not a word.

MAR. Has she given you encouragement?

LIL. Never a jot. But she shall give it in this letter. Write, write. *Sweet lord, it is winter with your love, the flaming summer of your passion.* Let old Danube see to it! An' if Caridorf and Joscelin stare not, and call me warrior, I'll go drown.

MAR. 'Twill open their eyes. [*Aside*] What a remarkable ass!

LIL. They jeered me t'other day that I was tongue-tied with women; that I was as shamefaced as a pudding, and altogether as harmless with a wench as an Italian balladsinger. Now by this, I shall pass for a campaigner, one that can skirmish in a corner, and not put on the bragging conquerer in public; a sly devil, a very sly devil; that kind of a thing women most love because so unlike themselves—a secret-keeper. Write, knave, write. Complain, for her, that I have forgotten my vows; that I am in quest of newer beauties; that she saw me whisper in Marian's ear; that she heard I was particular with Corinna; that I was seen in Juliana's garden; that I was suspected of coquetting with Maria; that I was heard singing under Urfrieda's window; that—

MAR. Lord, lord! If I write this, signor, you will be assassinated. If you will lie, lie with a few. Be discreet. Inordinate slander, boasting, and lying always expose themselves.

LIL. As thou wilt then. But let it be tender, excessively loving, unutterably amorous. To the ear, when read, let it sound sadly harmonious, like the whisper of a turtle to a lovesick swan. Let the letters be small and round, but withal gracefully negligent; and ever and anon drop thou some water on the letters, that they may blot and blister, as if tears had fallen on them. Make thou no stops, no commas, nor colons, nor periods; but between sentences draw thou a long dash, for this is significant of passion. Let there be breaks in the sentiment and the style, the moderate complaining suddenly jumping into piteous ejaculations, with many an *O* and *Ah, Alas* and *Ah, me*. Then let the conclusion die away into a melancholy oath, as *Thine am I, while Heaven shall last*; or, *I swear I love thee further than my poor wit can express*; subscribing it, *The adoring to her much adored*.

MAR. Sir, it is done. *Sweet lord, it is winter—*

LIL. Hist! As I live, Genevra herself, and coming this way! Good lord! how my heart beats!

MAR. If the beating of your heart were transferred to your shoulders, methinks you should be a braver man. Fie, fie, my lord! Can you brabble with men, and yet shake at a woman? Woo her, win her; accost, assault, salute,

attack her. Kneel to her, swear you love her. Never woman held out against a bended knee and protesting tongue.

LIL. Think you so? Well—but what if she frown?

MAR. Thank her for smiling. Frown!

LIL. Aye, but if she look awroth, and say, *Sir!* or, *Sir, what mean you?* or, *Sir, you have mistaken*, or, *Sir, I wonder at your rudeness*, or *insolences*, or *presumption*, or *impertinence*. What then, say now, what then?

MAR. Then, my lord, you must rise on your feet, and kiss her.

LIL. Kiss her! I would give a diamond brooch, a string of Indian pearlery, to kiss her, aye, as many pearls as she has teeth, as many rubies as she has lips. But dost think 'twill do? Will't do?

MAR. Excellently well, my lord. If she refuse you for love, make her the offer—the pearls and the rubies—she's marvellous poor.

LIL. But if she refuse them.

MAR. Then, sir, offer them to me. [*Aside*] Now I know he is very sap-headed, very weak and dropsical in the brain; and if I can force him to it, it will be a jest of a thousand with Sir Joscelin; and if it make not the gloomy Caridorf smile, he must be in a dying way. [*Aloud*] Sir Lillio, art faint-hearted? She comes.

LIL. Stand thou behind a tree; and if it so appear she scorn me, spring thou out upon her, with thy sword drawn, thy face horribly contorted with ferocity, and make as if thou wouldst kill her; whereupon I will draw my sword and rescue her.

MAR. Excellent! A notable stratagem! Then will her gratitude embrace with thy valour, and thou shalt suck thanks from her lips. She draws nigh. Now, my lord! She runs to your arms! [*Mari-gold retires behind a tree. Enter Genevra*]

GEN. Sure it was he. Confusion! 'Tis a stranger!

LIL. [*Aside*] Tongue-tied again! Wag, foolish member, wag, Or she is gone. [*Aloud*] O most adorable, I swear, I do most desperately love you.

GEN. This is some madman.

LIL. No, I am not mad,
But much enamoured. [*Aside*] 'Slife! I *can* speak now. [*Aloud*]
I am very happy of your company.

GEN. You much mistake me, sir. Pray let me pass.

LIL. Out of my heart? or, say, into my arms? [*Aside*]
I do begin to find I am naturally bold;
'Twas modest company spoiled me. [*Aloud*] Do not go,
But let me tell you, you are very handsome,

And I am very honest; therefore, love me,
For honesty being rarer far than beauty,
Should be beloved by beauty, as more precious.

GEN. You do me wrong, sir, thus by mocking me.
I pray you, let me pass.

LIL. And so I will,
If you will kiss me.

GEN. You are too rude, sir;
Your coat betokens you a gentleman,
But not your manners. Give me way.

LIL. I'll give
A string of pearls and rubies all of price,
If you will give me mine—my way—which is
Even the free highway to your lips, fair dame.

GEN. Insolent villain! [*Breaks from him and exit*]

LIL. Insolent villain! Whisht!

MAR. [*Advancing*] Bravo! You did it, signor, did it surprisingly. And yet you should have followed after her, when you had such stirring invitation.

LIL. Stirring invitation! If thou callest *insolent villain* a stirring invitation, why what in heaven's name, wilt thou call denial?

MAR. Nothing, if not consent. Had you been familiar with love's dictionary, you had found *insolent villain* meant *dear fellow*. And yet, when she said *dear fellow*, you followed her not!

LIL. Why, if you honestly think so, I will follow her.

MAR. Do, do. Honestly! Rot honesty, and be a campaigner. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 2: *Another part of the same. Enter Caridorf and Joscelin.*

JOSC. But is it fact? Are you inclined to go?
Are you resolved on exile from Vienna?

CAR. I am.

JOSC. Then I will go, and order forth
Your coffin, winding sheet, and many suits
Of sable sorrow for your burial.

CAR. Fair Joscelin, I pr'ythee, am I dead?

JOSC. Not yet, but dying. Let me see: Your eye
'Twas once a wicked, black, voluptuous eye—
Is filming o'er with a dead yellow glass,
Through which, as through a smoky telescope,
Fixed on the sun fast sinking in eclipse,

One may observe your soul's expiring lamp,
Losing his lustre. Let me feel your wrist:
The blood is stagnant in your arteries,
And every pulse is like a dead-watch tick.
Within your heart sits hypochondria,
That moping devil, whom not the hyssop's balm,
The juice of rue or other wholesome weed,
Can thence dislodge; and coldly on your brow
Reeks deadly clamminess; upon your lips
Is fixed the bluish tinge of coming death.
Sir, you will die the hour you leave Vienna.

CAR. And if I die not sooner, it is well;
Since such a dismal portraiture of death,
Drawn from my visage and appearances,
Even now strikes deathlike horror through my blood.
I pray you coin some tolerable jest,
That may meet half way with my merriment.

Josc. Thou art as merry as e'er an owl that hoots,
Or dog that howls, beneath a sick man's window.
Merriment! You were never merry. You
Are one of those fanatic fools that walk,
Like undertakers at a funeral,
Through the thronged world, wrapping themselves in gloom,
A slouched hat, and a monumental cloak;
And, gazing sourly on all recreation,
Would, if they could, the sober, monkish knaves,
Make the big earth one pitiful monastery!
You, merry! You could smile once, aye, and laugh—
Unwholesomely, after the fashion you put on,
A hollow mirth, a bear's good-natured growl.
But, by this hand, I've not seen thy black face
Look pleasant for a month. What is the cause?
Some say you are studying divinity;
Some, that you are pondering on mathematics;
Some swear you are in love, sick of an obstinate girl,
While others hint you banquet on bad wine.

CAR. My father's sickness sure is cause enough.

Josc. Aye, if you loved him. Come, throw off this gloom;
Seek out the medicine of two bright eyes,
With a pair of scented, dewy lips—rare drugs!—

They'll stir this humorous devil from your heart;
 Some smooth-browed wench, voluptuous, if you will;
 Or, if you had rather, cold as an icicle,
 And withal as melting. Yon same hooded one,
 Walking beneath the myrtle. By Saint Dominick!
 It is the fair Geneva.

CAR. You mistake,
 'Tis but a faint resemblance.

JOSC. Sir, the same.
 What does she here?

CAR. I know not: What is it to me?

JOSC. She is the jewel of our city beauty,
 And you that bask in the sunshine of her favour,
 Although a shadowy fellow, are a fool,
 A scurvy pattern of simplicity,
 To be a willing exile from Vienna—
 Unless you take her with you.

CAR. Speak not so lightly of her, man;
 For though I do not much regard her, sir,
 I have that much respect, sir, for her honour,
 That would not hear it mocked at.

JOSC. Pardon me.
 I thought you loved her.

CAR. Haply I may turn
 The same thought upon you.

JOSC. And so you may:
 I love Geneva, and some twenty more.
 If you deny affection to this lady—
 Wherein, I must confess, I have mistook you—
 And will depart irrationally cold,
 I pray excuse me that my reason runs
 In hotter current; for, I promise you,
 I'll woo her presently.

CAR. Nay, do not so;
 Your love is too licentious. And bethink you
 Although, as I have said, I love her not—
 As one that would protect her from all insult—
 I will not suffer a lascivious sigh
 Or liberal whisper to be uttered near her.

JOSC. Odd's heart! I'll woo her, as I woo my saint,

With such Platonic purity of heart,
 And such discreet formality of tongue,
 Had she seven times Diana's modesty,
 She need not blush to hear me.

CAR. Joscelyn,
 I pray remember that I am your friend,
 Have done you service, and stand ever ready
 With my best means to do you further favour;
 Therefore—I have a weighty cause for asking—give me
 Assurance that you will not urge her love,
 Nor plead your own, if it be true you love her;
 Be not content alone with caution in your speech,
 But be observant not to lose yourself
 In long, and seemingly forgetful gaze,
 Nor smile too meaningly, nor sigh at times,
 When in her presence—for these things are courtship.

Josc. Jealousy! What a singular ass art thou!
 I did but jest—good Caridorf, forgive me
 For that I saw—although you loved her not,
 As you have said—you loved her very much;
 And though I knew you did not much regard her,
 But had that much respect, sir, for her honour—

CAR. Peace, peace. I have some trouble on my heart,
 That makes it peevish under sarcasm, sir.
 Pray you, begone a moment, leave me here;
 I have a secret message for a friend,
 Which being finished, I will look for you
 At the Saint's Fountain.

Josc. I will wait you there. [*Exit*]

CAR. There's something damning in this secret flame,
 That gives it such unmeet publicity;
 None see me, but, with much significancy,
 Demand, What of Geneva, Caridorf?
 What of her! Aye, what of her? conscience cries,
 And Heaven itself, in my betraying dreams,
 Speaking with mine own false and babbling tongue,
 Cries out, What of Geneva, Caridorf?
 The stars were witnesses; and when they shine,
 My coward eyeballs read the tale of shame,
 Hung out, in their bright letters to men's eyes.

She comes. I did not purpose to desert her:
The act were blacker than ingratitude,
Fouller than that afflicts my spirit now.
Soft, soft! Geneva! [*Enter Geneva*]

GEN. O my lord, my lord!
I fear you will be angry at my boldness
In coming to this public place alone;
It does not show becoming to my sex;
But—

CAR. Well, Geneva.

GEN. Sir, you did not tell me,
What busy rumour whispered in my ears,
That Caridorf was about to leave Vienna;
And I, because I would not have it true,
I dared, I—

CAR. Well, Geneva.

GEN. Say not so.
It is not well, if it be so; and if
The rumour had a harsher sound to me
Than the last death bell to a malefactor,
How deadly curst must be the tongue of truth
That gives it confirmation! Oh, deny it,
Swear that it was some flat, malignant lie,
A poor device of calumny, my lord,
To wring the heartstrings of Geneva. Death!
You turn away, and will not speak! Oh, then,
I know by this, there is no falsehood in it;
But I am wearisome, a worthless weed
Ye would pluck rudely from your heart, and strew
Upon the highway to be trodden on.

CAR. You wrong me, and
These passionate words are slanders upon my love.

GEN. Say then you do not leave me.

CAR. My father lies upon the bed of death;
Thrice has he sent for me to close his eyes;
And I as oft, in the infatuation
Of love's strong sorcery, have shut my ears
Against his voice; and whilst I should have thonged
The winged spurs upon my heels, have idly
Toyed with the fetters thou hast fastened on them.

GEN. Still be it so. He never shewed you love,
That, but to stand beside his dying bed,
You leave me to a fate far worse than death.
Who is there in the world that will be kind
When Caridorf is not? I am alone,
An orphan poor and brotherless, my lord;
I have no kin; my brother, as thou knowest,
My brave and loving brother, was the last
Of all my father's blood; and Heaven took him,
And left me as an exile in the world.
I have no friends, none, none but Caridorf.

CAR. I shall most speedily return, Genevra.

GEN. Not so, not so; for in your absence, men
Will learn to scorn me, and yourself will shame
To look upon me. Let me go with you,
Guarded from contumely; make me yours;
Redeem thine honour by restoring mine,
Then take me with you. Look you pitiful?
Nay, then I know you will not thus desert me,
You will not Caridorf?

CAR. I never meant it.

You must leave this place; some of my friends are here:
I would not they should see you. Come with me. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 3. *A part of the same. Enter Joscelin and Marigold.*

JOSC. Thou art an endless wag! Can a man play the fool so deeply? Will he speak to her again?

MAR. Very certainly, sir, if she pass him. I have bestowed him under yonder myrtle, where he lies sighing like an oyster, because I have persuaded him into a very strong fit of love. You must betake yourself to a cover, signor, and examine the rencontre.

JOSC. Afore Heaven, I have hopes Caridorf may witness it; for then we shall have as much mirth out of his jealousy as Lillio's folly. I would give twenty ducats to see the colour of Caridorf's lips, when Lillio drops at her feet; blue, I warrant me.

MAR. And then, sir, when he reads the letter! But, sir, you will keep my secret?

JOSC. In my sleeve, where I will laugh daily. 'Sblood! what's this? Here comes Lillio, and Caridorf with him! Our sport is over. Genevra is gone.

MAR. Oh, but the letter, the letter! He itches to read it, and, to speak complimentarily of my own handiwork, it is notably well written.

JOSC. Let us to cover then. Let the fool and the jealous man bait each other, and determine which is the greater ass. [*Exeunt. Enter Caridorf and Lillio*]

LIL. Ha, ha! But didn't really see her? Now afore all the saints, I am sorry on't, for thou hast marred a meeting.

CAR. Marred a meeting! What mean you?

LIL. Nay now, thy God is incredulity;
And I am such a modest, bashful man,
With tongue that has no power but to stammer,
And eye that has no office but to blench,
And blood that has no nature but to blush,
Whene'er a lady come too near; I am sure
You'll not believe me, but on evidence
A rheum-eyed simpleton may apprehend.
Now you may laugh; and pray laugh like a cock,
For on you I will let the daylight break;
But on your honour, for Geneva's sake,
Keep thou the secret. Thou hast vilely marred
A meeting 'twixt myself, sir, and Geneva.

CAR. Ha, ha, ha!

LIL. You may laugh your fill,
Rend out your sides with merriment, but not
In such vile fashion. Pray you, laugh more gently.

CAR. Proceed. Sir, this is very comical.
[*Aside*] I do perceive the fashion of his coat
Looks like a liar's. But wherefore?

LIL. Comical!
Thus do you ever answer my love stories—
Because I do not often boast me of them,
You think them naught but cunning coinages—
And when I speak of excellent vows and kisses,
You laugh and say, '*Tis very comical!*
Faith, you shall hear no more.

CAR. I pray you, speak.
I did mistake—it is not comical.

LIL. You know her, yes. She told me she had some
Most insufficient knowledge of your person.

CAR. Hum—did she so? And I of hers?

LIL. O yes,

Some slight acquaintanceship, and wondered much
You seemed to shun her.

CAR. Very good! [*Aside*] Why, damn
This scarlet-jerkined parrot! [*Aloud*] Sir, go on.
You have more to say—some delicate passages—
Letters and kisses—perhaps chamberings—
Corner encounters? Have you not? Confess it.

LIL. And you'll be secret?

CAR. Secret as the grave:
It shall not travel farther.

LIL. Pr'ythee, be secret, lop thy rude tongue off
That ever itches to say Lillio
Has been too loving and familiar.

CAR. [*Aside*] Death!
Can I give credence to the withering lie
Comes from this villain's mouth! Ha, ha! familiar!
Voluptuous knave! Ha, ha, familiar!

LIL. Be honourable, and I'll show thee tokens,
Whereof this one was very lately writ. [*Gives the letter*]

CAR. Fie!
Must I so shake upon a little scrawl!
I should not so upon my death warrant.
'Tis not her hand! Ha, ha! Fool that I was
To doubt this painted parrot for a man.
'Tis not her hand!

LIL. I grant you, it may seem so;
But she has wit, a very excellent wit.
You would not have her use her proper hand!

CAR. Ha! Stand aside. Disguised! Methinks this letter,
This damned smooth L, looks like, aye, very like.
O woman—devil! What signature? Genevra!
The adoring to her—Cursed hypocrite!
Yes, I could swear this signature is hers,
So wantonly neglectful, with its dash
Crooked as her own hypocrisy, and black
As her own wantonness. *Summer of passion—*
Winter of love—Strumpet! So long ago!
The moon that saw our dalliance—Devil of blackness!
Insolent liar! Swear this is a forgery,
A damned, malignant, flat, unfounded lie,

Or I will slay you!

LIL. Gods! sir, are you mad!

Take your rude, violent fingers from my throat.

CAR. Slave, draw thy sword; I will not murder thee.
Draw, and defend thy life.

LIL. You heap insulting epithets and abuse
Upon me, which I'll willingly answer, sir,
Being first persuaded that you are not mad.

CAR. Injurious fool! Wilt play the coward now?
Draw, or be beaten like a dog, a fool!

LIL. So be it, sir. I may be weak and foolish,
But there was never yet an inch of flesh
Called coward in me, but he that said it, died! [*They fight. Enter Joscelin and Marigold*]

JOSC. Beat down their swords. Ho, Caridorf! Lillio!
Art mad! Hold, hold! O Heaven! Poor Lillio! [*Lillio falls*]

MAR. O my dear master!

LIL. Marigold is't? It felt like ice, sharp ice—
A very cold messenger from a hot man.

JOSC. Are you hurt deeply?

LIL. Finished, I think, sir, finished.
I have a good, old father, Joscelin!

JOSC. A surgeon!

LIL. Stir not. I am dying fast enough.
Let me speak to this rash and furious man.

I partly understand your madness, sir,
And wherefore you have struck me. 'Twas not well.

The cause lies in your own dissimulation,
Which swore indifference of Genevra to me,
And in your savage and insulting spirit,
Which drowned all fair and free expostulation
In taunts and insults quite unbrookable;
Yet,—not that I would deprecate your wrath,
Nor purchase your forgiveness, which I scorn—
But out of honourable penitence,
In that I have done an orphan injury,
I truly now declare, that all I've said
Derogatory to Genevra's honour,
Is false, quite false, yet not malignly false,
Since it was rather meant for jest than harm.

The note's a counterfeit.

CAR. O Lillio!

LIL. Begone, rash man. There is a demon sways
Thy fortunes and thy spirit; thou'rt his tool,
His very jackal, dog, and weak familiar.
What, I must die, like to a common thief,
For murdering of a jest! And in the threshold
Of life's fair edifice, fiercely be struck down!
And in the sunrise of my being, be blasted!
Stabbed in the midst of wealth, hope, pleasure, fame,
Because thou could'st not laugh at my poor jest!
Oh, curse thy vile and murderous hand, that struck
The damning steel into my heart, and poured
The rich blood of my life upon the ground
As prodigally as water! Curse ye, curse!
Curse—take my curse, thou bitter man of blood!
I tell thee, thou art cursed of man and God,
Shalt live a homicide, and die a dog! [*Dies. Caridorf gathers up his sword
and exit*]

Josc. O woful ending to this foolish sport!
Fly, Caridorf! He is gone, and well for him:
He has made forfeit of his life in this,
Or flies a hunted outlaw from the land.
Bear we the corse before the magistrate,
Then to—alas!—his wretched father's house! [*Exeunt, with the body*]

SCENE 4: *A gallery hung round with antique portraits. Enter Geneva.*

GEN. The die is cast: my destiny turns up
With all the inkspots that the dice can show,
Yet is not gain. O noble ancestors,
Not more begrimed by the foul hand of time
Your rotting effigies upon the wall,
Than lost Geneva by the slime of sin.
Your tattered canvas shows an honest ruin,
But mine's dishonest and dishonourable;
There's something reverend and admirable
In your dilapidation: men can gaze,
And say your glory is not yet departed.
But who can look upon the sinful wreck

Left in the heart of your last representative,
 And not say, *Ruin, hasten with your work!*
 I dare not gaze upon my father's image;
 The eyes are stern, and sharply follow me;
 My mother's, too, they look so sadly on me,
 With such reproving woe, such moving anguish,
 Such shame and pity mixed with tenderness,
 They rend my heart. O Caridorf! [*Enter Caridorf*]

CAR. Geneva,
 I've brought you here the boy's habiliments.
 Go quickly change yourself. Here is the net
 To loop your hair in, feather, hat, belt, sword,
 And all the other gaudy bravery
 Of pageship. Get you gone, and briefly;
 The horses wait us.

GEN. Why so hurriedly?
 Methinks some breathing space for thought—

CAR. Do you not see,
 My face is speckled o'er with blood? Come, quick.

GEN. With blood! I see none.

CAR. Why then, see my hands.

GEN. Yet there's no blood. What mean you, Caridorf?

CAR. You cannot see't? Well then, I will take heart.
 Methought they were so very purple-coloured,
 Men could read murder on them.

GEN. Murder!—

CAR. We must begone—stand not for argument—
 Must fly Vienna, aye, and Germany,
 And instantly. Nay, do not linger thus,
 Nor gaze with girlish terror on the garment:
 Have I not sworn to you that your next suit
 Shall sure be nuptial? [*Exit Geneva*]
Shalt live a homicide—'twas so he spake,
 Cursing me, cursing me! He did not die
 In charity, but cursing! His last word was a curse,
 Wrapped in a prophecy—and I do feel it
 Already in my bones, a hell of horror,
 Remorse, and fear! *Accursed of man and God!*
 He should have added, accursed of myself;
 For 'tis myself that stamp thus on my face

The accusing mark of blood, which men will read,
And, shrinking, heap more curses on the homicide! [*Exit*]

ACT II.

SCENE I: *A room in Caridorf's castle. Enter Julio and Bullet.*

JUL. And thou art assured of this, Bullet? His associates are among the licentious and unprincipled of the young Vienna nobles? Thou art assured of it?

BUL. Aye, master Julio, as I am assured I was knocked on the head like a hogshead, and kicked like old sole-leather; wherefore, master Julio, I am assured of it from the top of my head to the bottom of my sole.

JUL. But why on the head, silly Bullet?

BUL. I should have been rather knocked on the nose, seeing that my head did but run after my nose. But it was master Caridorf's notion to knock me on the head; and he knows better on't than Bullet. I did but dog him one night in the streets, and he beat me like a dog.

JUL. But does Vienna so scurrilously speak of him?

BUL. Aye, Vienna is famous for speaking of everybody. I did myself but peep round the corner at the chambermaid, and the cook-maid spoke of it; I did but say *Good e'en* to the cook-maid, and the chambermaid said, *Good morrow to your nightcap*. They say master Caridorf is a trespasser and a rake, that rakes the grounds whereon he trespasses; and truly these trespass grounds are the grounds of his offense, master Julio.

JUL. But how liked your wisdom such of his companions as you saw?

BUL. Marry not at all, sir; I liked them not. There be three of them whom Vienna calls the Three Graces, the Three Graces, master Julio; and yet they be forsworn of all grace, and given over to carnal doings. I had rather be a dog, broiling under the Dog Star, than have my liver eaten up by such lewd hot blood as is theirs.

JUL. But among all this evil that is said of my brother, is there mingled no good report?

BUL. As much as would be one grain of salt in a bushel of pepper. They tell me, master Julio, that the devils make their meals of sinners; but I would not have the eating of such hot spicery as is master Caridorf to be your king of devils; he would bring the tears into one's eyes, like strong mustard.

JUL. Sirrah, you are too free. My brother
Was ever noted for a moody man,
Commonly dark and serious of soul;

And although apt to start from his sad gloom
Into wild rhapsodies of merriment,
Sparkling with jocund and eccentric wit,
His general humour is so cold and sad,
His 'haviour so retiring and repulsive,
It is not credible he should thus cast off
His nature, to be mingled with the world.
What answer gave he? Did he tell thee, sirrah,
He would not come, as all thy words import?

BUL. Not he; but he knocked me on the head: wherefore I conclude he will not come. I beseech you, master Julio, when a young man meets a young damsel in the corner, takes her hand thus, wraps his arm round her body thus, looks in her face thus, like a dog watching at a dinner table, and kisses her after this fashion,—what means it? What is it?

JUL. Love, I conceive, wisdom, love. Whereto tends this?

BUL. I followed him, master Julio, through alleys and groves, streets and gardens, till I housed him. Aha, that's love, is it? Had you but seen how he took her by the hand, thus: and quoth he, so and so; and quoth she, so and so; and quoth I, "So, so!" and then sayeth he, "So!" and knocks me on the head so. Therefore I ran off, and never looked once back till I was safe here in the castle.

JUL. But what was this damsel?

BUL. Why marvellous well looking.

JUL. But who, knave? Her name?

BUL. Truly, had every knock been a name, I should have had her name knocked into my head; had every cuff been a letter of the alphabet, you should find her name scored upon my scalp.

JUL. Was she of family, or breeding?

BUL. Honestly now, I saw no signs of that. No, I think she was a maid; and not in the family way, nor breeding.

JUL. You mistake me, silly fellow. Was she of rank? Of a noble and ancient house?

BUL. Her house was rather the worse for the wear; and if having an old house make one noble, she was noble. I know nothing of her now. What I did know, master Caridorf has knocked clean out of my head.

JUL. Hark, you, sirrah Bullet: Be silent of this among thy fellows. Forget what thou knowest of my brother, and now begone. [*Exit Bullet*]

'Tis strange, a son, a first-born, sent for thrice
To smooth the pillow of a weak old parent,
Should thus send back a bootless messenger!
I must believe 'tis something stronger than
The mere diversions of the city binds him

To disobedient and unkind neglect.
 I'll not believe this fool: it cannot be
 A fellowship with rakes and fools restrains him.
 I'll not believe his friends are found with these
 Disgraceful models of the town's refinement:
 The scowling gambler and the desperado;
 The riotous drunkard, who, o' nights, assaults
 The sick man's slumber and the city's calm,
 Thinking it honour with patrols to bluster
 In violent fury; the disgustful rake
 That makes his temple of the public stew,
 And calls debauchery his god; and him,
 The verier villain, that lays snares and lime
 To trap the virtue of weak-witted women;
 No, 'tis not this. Some softer string is knotted
 Upon his heart, that's in captivity,
 Struck blind by bright eyes, by soft hands enslaved,
 Fed by warm lips and soul-seducing sighs.
 There's nothing sure but woman's love can start
 A son's affection from a human heart. [*Exit*]

SCENE 2: *A sylvan spot on the banks of the Danube. Enter Ludowick and Agnes.*

AGNES. Follow me not, thou uncivil personage. Must thou ever persecute me with nonsense, and run after me like a shadow?

LUD. Ever while the sun shines. Come, sit thee down here beside this reverend oak, and thou shalt be Diana, and I will be thy Endymion.

AGNES. Oh, thou art a madman, a most peevish, incorrigible, and wearisome madman. I would thou wert blind or lame, that I might ramble without being seen or followed. Odd's life! I dare not pluck a flower, but thou layest claim to it, and with the baptism of a sigh, callest it Agnes! I would not I were Diana, for I would shoot thee with arrows.

LUD. What needs it, when you carry on your shoulders an archer that is always piercing me with arrows; yea, and with knives and lancets, spears and ploughshares; that harrows up my heart like a fallow field, and sows it with roses, violets, and all sorts of unprofitable exotics; that robs my brain and body of the healthful corn of good wit and manner, and then, having filled me with the chaff, and dry stalks of folly, sets fire to me till I burn—Jupiter! how I burn!

AGNES. Thou art certainly mad.

LUD. Yea, truly, unexceptionally, and irretrievably mad; of a necessity, too, for I am in love.

AGNES. Follows that of a necessity? Why then, if you are in love, you should sit you down on a bank and weep; not laugh so immoderately as you are wont, for love is a sad passion; not prattle so loudly, for it is silent and contemplative; not array yourself in such disciplined bravery, for love is partial to foul raiment. Then you should wander, like a ghost, by moonlight, singing extempore under your lady's window; write sonnets and epigrams to her beauty; but never dare follow her when she rambles, nor fasten on her fingers when she gives you good counsel.

LUD. By these fingers, you err. Love is not so sad, but he can at times be noisily merry; nor so silent, but he can sometimes outroar Stentor. If to be in love be for a man to go in negligent apparel, to the discomfiture of all mirror-makers; to whine in moonlight, when he has blessed sunshine to laugh in; to sing under his mistress's window, when he might dance in through the door; to write wailful requests upon paper, when he might read consents and invitations in her eyes; to follow her not when she bids him by prohibitions; to moralize soberly on her hand, when he holds it in his own,—[*Kisses her hand*] why then, heaven save me, I am a heartwhole bachelor.

AGNES. Thou art a most presumptuous and insufferable—Let be my fingers till I wipe away thy uncivil kisses. [*Enter Bullet*]

BUL. [*Aside*] Oh! and quoth she so! and quoth he—

LUD. Barbarous judge, if incivility must be wiped away, why then for your lips, for they are wondrous uncivil.

BUL. So, so! I pr'ythee now, master Ludowick, do not knock me on the head, for master Caridorf hath so done.

LUD. Thou ill-favoured villain!

AGNES. Nay, I'll have thee, thou beautiful moth! [*Runs about the stage*]

BUL. So, so.

LUD. Villain Bullet, what would you here?

BUL. Icod! she hath nabbed him, and the butterfly's hers!

AGNES. What said you, Bullet, of my brother Caridorf?

BUL. That he had caught a butterfly, honoured madam.

AGNES. Silly fool!

LUD. Hearkie, villain, what hast thou to say of Caridorf? Say it, and be gone.

BUL. Why then I'll say nothing more of butterflies; but there's a young lord, in a riding dress awfully bespattered and out of his order, who cometh down the hill, leading a young pipestem with sword and feather, that he

callesh his page. And master Julio says it is my lord Caridorf come home; but woman knoweth the butterfly.

AGNES. My brother! my dear truant brother! [*Exit Agnes*]

BUL. Honoured captain.

LUD. Ha! good Bullet, thou hast brought me an answer from my sister? What is this? *To Genevra Wallenstein*. Villain, you have brought me back my own letter!

BUL. Indeed, sir, I had forgotten the superscription. I called the scullion to me, and said I, *Scullion, read me this superscription*: then said the scullion, *Here are two capitals, a G and a W; but for the little letters I can't understand them; G stands for a Roast Goose, and W for a Wild Boar*; and therefore the scullion left me. Then I should have asked my lord Caridorf; but he knocked me on the head, and I remembered it no more.

LUD. Curse your simplicity, or rather my own, that made such a fool my messenger. I must send to her by a safer conveyance, and that shall be myself. [*Exit Ludowick*]

BUL. So! So the world worketh. Wise people run after butterflies. Catch a butterfly, or a gadfly, or a bluebottle fly, or any other sort of fly. When the cork is out of the bottle, the liquor will fly; when the cage is broken, the bird will fly; and, finally, when the firkin is open, the butter will fly. And so of women, when caught themselves, they catch a butterfly! I did not so; for when I was found courting the fishwoman, I did but shake my head, and say nay; whereas had I been brought up a gentleman, I had turned to catching butterflies! Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha! They may call Bullet fool, or noddle, or noodle, or poodle—ha, ha, ha! I'll have thee thou beautiful—[*Enter Schwartz, abruptly*]

SCHW. The devil thou wilt? Stand!—still as a mouse, till I rob you!

BUL. I can't; my knees knock together. Honourable sir, what will you?

SCHW. Your money, or your blood.

BUL. Excellent, honourable sir, I have neither. I am poor, and but thinly fed; so that if you cut open my pockets, you will find them as empty as my veins.

SCHW. Silence, rascal, or I'll cut your throat.

BUL. [*Kneeling*] Not for the world, my lord.

SCHW. Thou beggarly dog, why callest me lord? Your money! [*Rifles his pockets*] Empty! Vomit, you dog, if you have swallowed it, or I'll slice your gullet. [*Presents a knife at his throat*]

BUL. For heaven's sake, noble sir! I'll vomit, or purge, or sweat, or bleed, or blister, or draw teeth; but spare my throat. Here it is.

SCHW. Thou starveling cat! Is this thy all?

BUL. Aye; make it not my end.

SCHW. Take it then again; I rob not such copper-furnished rascals. Rise, and tell me who were yon same youth and damsel I saw with you just now?

BUL. That I will, good sir. The young man is a proper fellow, Captain Ludowick, mayhap, that was born in Vienna of the nobles, and shot two years ago at the grand battle.

SCHW. Shot, fool! Take courage; I will not harm you.

BUL. Noble sir! Then the lady is my lady Agnes.

SCHW. Daughter of the old baron Caridorf?

BUL. The same, excellent sir.

SCHW. Where is the old baron?

BUL. Sick abed, good sir.

SCHW. Why then you may go about your business. But look you; this knife is devilish sharp, and your throat is in jeopardy, if you mention to any living soul this affair, which, after all, was nothing but a jest. So farewell, and look to your throat. [*Exit Schwartz*]

BUL. And my money. Why what a bloody cutthroat it was! I warrant now he had robbed me, had I opened the right pocket! Lord, ye pretty little yellow rascals! Ye were never made to be robbed. [*Exit, jingling his purse*]

SCENE 3: *A room in the castle. Enter Caridorf, Julio, and Geneva as a page.*

CAR. You say our father's better?

JUL. Better, brother.

Yet, if I judge, yourself are surely ill;
Your face is haggard, wayworn and perturbed:
You have rode hard, and bear marks—

CAR. Marks! What marks?

GEN. Good my lord,

Be more composed; your clothes are soiled with riding.
Sir, he is heated by the day's hard travel,
And worn into a fever. [*Whispers to Caridorf*]

JUL. 'Tis a handsome page, yet too effeminate.

CAR. Be satisfied.

JUL. Too young to be so sad; too beautiful
To wear that piteous look of grief. I see
A something on his cheek that doth denote
A worm in the heart. Those meekly clasped hands,
That drooping head, and that dejected air,
Belong not to a coarse and menial sorrow.
Brother, where had you yon same handsome page?

What call you him?

CAR. Him!—O my only brother,
I had forgot.—Adorio's his name:
But he is troubled by your free regard.
Come, walk aside with me.—Yon page, good brother,
Is born of blood as gentle as our own;
But wrongs, and sorrows, and oppressive fate,
Outlawry, and a value on his head,
Have clothed him in this seeming servitude.

JUL. Can he be criminal, who is so young,
So soft, so fair, so feminine?—A boy!
Were he but decked in woman's weeds, methink,
He were no Amazon.

CAR. Hum—very like.
He is a tender boy, but still an outlaw,
And so am I, good brother. Do not start.
We come not here as gallant visitors,
To join your pageants and festivities;
But as poor hunted outlaws, that beseech
Shelter and refuge from our enemies.

JUL. What words are these? You surely mock me, sir!

CAR. Truth, truth. The boy is noble, and was wronged
By a base slanderer, and a libertine,
Even in the tenderest vitals of his honour;
And I, for that I hold him in my heart
Much like a brother or a lover, feeling
The boy's inaptness to a just revenge,
Smote the rude libeller; while the boy himself,
With noble and unprecedented virtue,
In that he made forgiveness his revenge,
Heaped coals of fire upon the other's head;
Which, though they scorch him like a hell, have not
Assuaged his fury nor his persecution.
Know then, the avenger of bloodguiltiness,
With all his bloodhounds of the law, pursued us;
And shameful death awaits us. Give us refuge,
Locking our secret in your inmost thoughts.
We will tarry with you for a day or two,
Until provided for a farther flight.
Shut fast your doors; purge you the house of all

These menial superfluities; give out
That we are fled, and our sire sick to death;
And therefore you have closed the doors against
Injurious visits.

JUL. I am sick to hear it.
O my dear brother, is it possible
Your hand has shed a fellow being's blood?

CAR. He was a slanderer, and deserved his doom;
A base, low boaster of a woman's favours;
Coined notes, and billets, and prodigious lies,
Wherewith among his fellows, lewd young men,
Who meet to glory in their wantonness,
He stabbed the innocent and unsullied fame
Of a poor unprotected girl, the wretched sister
Of this as wretched brother. Therefore, boy,
Although his blood is heavy on me, and I
Could wish the wrong had been punished by another,
Honour and justice both proclaim his death
Most richly earned; for hell itself produces
Naught that is half so foul to good men's eyes
As a base slanderer.

JUL. Oh, yes, more base,
More vile, more foul, more devilish the seducer,
The spotted libertine (you mentioned such
As implicated in this young lord's troubles)
Who makes that shining heaven, a woman's virtue,
The aim of black and sacrilegious lust;
Because 'tis bright, like a malignant demon,
Would make it blacker than his own scorched heart;
Because 'tis pure, as the sweet crystal rivers
That run through Paradise, would poison it
With sin's sharp venom and remorse's tears.

CAR. [*Aside*] Wilt moralize? Well, let him prattle on:
I like his honesty, although it strike,
In every word, a deep and smarting gash.
His youth has known no passion; and his virtue,
Which, like a new sound bell, rings out sweet chimes,
May sometime lose its music, being cracked,
And, in its fall, elicit sinful discords.
No more of this. [*Aloud*]

Tell me what guests are in the house?

JUL. There are none,
Save a young soldier, Ludowick; a man
Held in such honour and esteem by us,
We shall shortly call him brother.

CAR. Ludowick?—
A soldier? I have heard of one so called,
That perished—[*Enter Agnes*] Agnes!

AGNES. O my brother!

GEN. [*Aside*] Brother!
I had a brother also; but 'tis better
I have none now.

AGNES. You have grown solemn, brother—
You ever were accounted a philosopher,
Such as most loved the solitude of woods,
Nocturnal rivers, and the frightful gloom
Of ragged crags of the mountains. Pr'ythee now,
The city is no place for a philosopher:
Why staid you there? Or why came not away
With a more pleasant visage?

CAR. I will tell you—And first—

AGNES. What mournful page is that?
He weeps. Good brother, speak to him.

CAR. Forbear:
His sorrows must be sacred. [*Enter a Servant*]

SERV. My lord, the baron, your father, is impatient for your presence.

CAR. I will follow.
Fair sister, and you, Julio, attend—
Be kind to my poor page; let none come near him,
Especially this guest, this Ludowick. [*Exit, with the Servant*]

GEN. Ludowick!
Was't that he said? I'm sure 'twas Ludowick!
Good madam—nay—young lord—I am very rude!

JUL. Excuse not. We are familiar with your state;
And well we know, that servile suit conceals
The body of a nobleman.

GEN. [*Aside*] Good heaven!
This servile suit is noble to myself;
But let it pass—Then, with your leave, I pray,

Spoke not my good lord Caridorf just now
Of one called Ludowick?

JUL. He did. Why ask you?
This gentleman has been some time our guest;
Today he leaves the castle for Vienna.

AGNES. [*Aside*] Ha! does he so? I thought he spoke in jest. [*Exit*]

GEN. Vienna! Ludowick! What startling thoughts
These words give birth to in my wildered brain!
Is he a soldier?—But, why should I ask?
The grave cannot give up the dead; and I
Would not it should.

JUL. You seem to have an interest
In our young soldier's story.
He was with Sobieski and Lorrain,
When the bold Turk planted his batteries
Against the ramparts of our capital;
And in the assault against those infidels,
Being wounded sore, was taken prisoner,
And lay a long time in captivity—
Indeed, I have heard he was reported dead.
You are ill!

GEN. His house was—

JUL. Wallenstein.

GEN. Comes he then back, to find this dismal world
Less hospitable than the grave he left?
Could he not lie still in the comfortable grave,
But must come back to open one for me?
Now I am sure he'll slay me. I am ready;
But that I had rather he were dead again,
With happy dreams of honour, than to blush
So much blood at my vices, that my heart
Will not afford him enough? Why, now I hate him,
Because he comes to rave about dishonour,
When, whiles I thought him dead, I could find none
To rave on't but myself! It is a judgement!
He hath been sent back to this gloomy world
By an o'er meddlesome power, that would make mirth
Out of his heartsick and vindictive wrath,
And would have him murder me!

JUL. "Tis very strange!
This muttering ecstasy! That ghastly glare
Of the fixed eyes!

GEN. I have a sword;
And, if I judge, with his proud sense of honour,
'Twere better stab him, than to let him live,
Cursing and shrinking from the sidelong look,
The grinning mouth, and the calumnious finger
Of the world's scorn—Well, well, nor more of this.
He must away.

JUL. Adorio!

GEN. Well, sir—
I crave your pardon for my absence. If I show
Too much emotion in this soldier's story,
'Tis on his sister's account.

JUL. Ha! what of her?
I have heard him speak so much of his Genevra,
His dear and only sister, of her beauty,
Her excellent parts, and virtue, that I was nigh
To grow enamoured of the picture.

GEN. There is a heavy story for his ear,
Of grief and anguish; much adversity
Did that poor sister suffer; solitude,
A forlorn solitude, for poverty
Had thinned her friends; and too much grieving sent her,
Untimely, not unwilling, to the grave.
She is dead.

JUL. That is indeed, a heavy story;
And must not come too rudely to his ears. [*Exit*]

GEN. 'Twould fall like heavenly music on them, did he know
The further woe that is prepared for him.
O God! that I could lay this tortured frame
Beneath the bulk of mountains, or the depths
Of drowning seas, and be awhile at rest;
Shake off the memory of all former time,
The ills and grievances of present being,
And all the fears of future wretchedness;
Regain my childhood, and be nursed a slave,
A bondsman's child, deserted and despised,
Oppressed and beaten—but still innocent! [*Exit*]

SCENE 4: *Before the castle. Enter Philibert, and Bullet, with wine.*

PHIL. Bullet, I swear you are a witty man,
And pun at a neat hand gallop. Now, by the lord,
I think puns, quibbles, double-entendres, tropes,
Epigrams, repartees, bons mots, conundrums,
Lampoons, and several other comical things,
Are as material to your witty man
As legs to your horses. Wherefore, spavin me,
But you're a wag: and therefore pun me a pun
Upon my departure; for I go, I go.

BUL. I know not what is your pun, nor your nepigrammes, nor your lam-
peroons; nor know I how to pun upon a pun. But I am said, an' you'll call
that a pun.

PHIL. Excellent, dock me! Though 'twould take your colt
Of college scholarship to make it out,
Rather than an ordinary ass like me.
So, another cup of Rhenish, if you please;
And another.—You're a comical.—Another!
In wit a zebra,—to wit, a wild ass—Good!
Now I feel warm and vigorous at stomach,
And can go straddle on your Pegasus,
Which is your whoreson horse, a mettled fellow,
That jumped some fifty feet o'er the walls of Troy,
And kicked the steeples down. Another, Bullet.
This warms the liver, and ties him to the ribs,
And therefore's good against hard trotting horses.
You have an excellent wit; and it is shown
In the wine you keep: for bad wine is the father
Of much stupidity.

BUL. And so, Master Philibert, Captain Ludowick must go to Vienna?
That Vienna is a bad town, full of wickedness and temptation.

PHIL. He must, my wag, and I must follow with him,
Though with as little joy, as an alderman's horse
Charged in battle. You have excellent forage here.
Would he would leave me as your garrison.

BUL. I would so, too, Master Philibert; for it does me good to hear thee
expound over a flagon.

PHIL. The bottle is the fountainhead of wisdom,
And wine the tonic of weak understandings.

Here comes the captain: I have not been long
In his pay; but he's an excellent jolly dog,
As all masters should be, when they have good servants. [*Enter Ludowick*]

LUD. Sirrah, my horse! What, stand you there to drink
And prate? My horse, knave, instantly my horse!

PHIL. That's ordered like a general, peremptorily;
And therefore, Bullet, we must part.—The nag
Is saddled, sir.

LUD. Begone then, both of you, away! [*Exeunt Bullet and Philibert*]
Well met, fair lady, for a doleful parting. [*Enter Agnes*]

AGNES. I thought you did but jest, when you before spoke of it.

LUD. I have often spoken of it,
And should have been hence a week ago, but for
The mischievous supplication of thine eyes,
And mine own lovesick lunacy, that would not let me.

AGNES. A few days longer will not weary us.

LUD. In seriousness then, I have a sister
Whom I would see—

AGNES. But you have written to her.

LUD. Twice, but received no answer. Once indeed,
My letter, being entrusted to a fool,
Returned to me: I fear the other has miscarried.
It is not well, whatever be the cause,
To be neglectful of a sister's love,
An orphan sister's, too, and one, perhaps,
That may believe me dead. My horse is saddled.
Farewell. [*Enter Julio*] In good time, gentle Julio.
I am about to leave you, for a time.

JUL. Pray you a word; fair sister, give us leave
For a moment. [*Exit Agnes*] You will find many changes
Have happened in Vienna since you saw it last.

LUD. I doubt it not. Some friends perhaps are dead,
Some grown forgetful, and very many married:
But the pleased looks of a neglected sister
Shall put all right.

JUL. You should not be too sanguine.
Two years work many changes.

LUD. You should not be
Too sanguine! What means this? By heaven! you have

Some dismal news, which you would tell me of.
Out with it, man. I have been schooled to crosses,
And will not play the baby with your story.

JUL. Your sister's dead.

LUD. Dead!—I am smote on the brain!—
I did not hear.—You said someone was dead!

JUL. Geneva—

LUD. Geneva! that's my sister's name.
Dead, did you say?

JUL. What means this apathy?
This dull, perplexed, and unbelieving face?

LUD. Dead, dead, dead, dead! In truth 'tis very sad.
Whence had you the intelligence?

JUL. From my brother's page.

LUD. I wish to see that page.

JUL. I fear you cannot.
Danger compels him to be secret.

LUD. 'Tis no matter.
I had hoped to wear a lighter face at parting;
But, as it is, farewell. But lately dead?

JUL. But lately, friend. Pray go not forth today.

LUD. Now, by my soul, the fools, will out at last!
That girl, my Julio, that much loved sister,
That only sister, was my secret comfort,
That in the dark day of despondency,
Cast a bright vizer o'er my countenance;
My pride, the last pride of a noble house
Bowed down by much adversity and costs;
My joy, my joy, whose angel face did often
Gleam through the gratings of my weary prison,
Filling my soul with pleased tranquillity;
And when I wished to break my chains and fly,
It was that I might share my fate with her,
And show her that a parent's love could rest,
Together with a brother's, in a brother's breast.
But, but—no more. But lately?—Had I gone
As swiftly on my course, as when at first
I broke my bonds, these tears might have been shed
Upon her bosom, not upon her grave. [*Exeunt*]

ACT III.

SCENE I: *A room in the castle. Enter Caridorf and Geneva.*

CAR. Alive? I do rejoice to hear it.

GEN. Oh, no!

You cannot say that you rejoice to hear
What's omen of disastrous death to me.
Your passion may have cooled, my lord, your love
Turned traitor, like your promises, and sunk
Into a dull and cruel lethargy—
Forgetful that although your heart be calm,
There's one here vexed by a corrosive ache,
That passes poison—still, although indifferent
Of what may touch my honour or my life,
You are not yet so pitiless to rejoice
In what may be my death.

CAR. Fie! Cast away
This peevish melancholy; be yourself;
I have need of lighter spirits.

GEN. I have often
Tried to look gay, to please you—

CAR. Do so now.

GEN. Bid me cast off these infamous vile weeds,
And then you shall not ask me. Nay, 'tis not
In tenor lest my brother's honest wrath
Should aim at my poor life, that urges me:
Let him strike deep as ever weapon went,
He will but follow up a hurt that's deeper;
I would not have him martyred to my shame;
I would not have him curse himself nor me.
Be just to *him*. Let all be dark and private,
Unknown to men, a secret to the world:
I not aspire to be proclaimed your wife,
Or to take part in any of your honours;
I'll be your slave, your humble, happy slave—
But only give me the authority
To tell my brother he is not dishonoured.

CAR. You vex me.

GEN.

Vex you, Caridorf!

That is not kind.

CAR.

She weeps! So—that is common.

The clouds are not more plentiful of rain
In a moist April, than her eyes of tears;
Yet they not much affect me, save to cool
The ardour of my fancy, and to lose
The heart that formerly she won with smiles.
Once, once there fell not one transparent drop
From her young eyes, but it was followed here
By a blooddrop from my heart: for tears were rare;
They give me duller pity now. Why is it so?
I once did sue her to become my wife,
And, while she shrank, more deeply coveted her
Than starving men a sustenance, or dying,
Another hour of life. But *I* was then
The wooer, the petitioner, and urged
To more importunacy by my doubts.
The scene is changed, and she is now the suitor;
And I, who am the master she solicits,
Do find it true, particularly true,
Love turns to loathing, when a woman woos.
Yet hate I not, nor willingly oppress;
But it would seem some witchcraft warps my mind,
And makes my pride and my suspicious nature
The rulers of my heart and sense of honour.—
Come, come, Geneva. Why do you weep?

GEN.

Look on me,

And tax your heart to tell you why I weep.
Ask who I am—I will not say Geneva,
One that was sprung of high and noble blood,
Nor one that, being left forlorn and friendless,
Was wronged, and made the despised slave and dupe
Of him that was loved too much to oppress;
No, no, not that—I am a happy thing—
I swear I'm very happy; and these tears,
Which you may think are scalding drops of shame,
And sharp rebukers of your cruelty,
Are evidences of my peace of mind,
For ladies are so silly they will weep

When they are happy, as well as when they are sad. [*Enter Julio, behind*]

CAR. Well, well, be cheerful. I was peevish with you.

Perhaps when Ludowick returns, Genevra—

At least I think so, and that should assure you—

He'll give you honourable welcome. 'Sdeath!

Young brother, do you steal upon me so?—

Could he have heard me? Nay—I beg your pardon,

Some message from my father?

JUL. Yes, my brother:

He begs you'll go to him. If I've offended,

I pray you pardon me, my brother.

CAR. Sad?

There is some melancholy on you, Julio.

JUL. Is there, my lord? I was not conscious of it.

CAR. It were unwise to leave you with Adorio,

Who is devoured with sadness like a harpy.

You will be poor company.

JUL. Do not believe it:

I shall be merry presently.

CAR. Well, well.

Adorio has need of cheerful friends.

[*Aside*] Yet there is more in such a sudden grief

Than he confesses. I will see to it. [*Exit*]

JUL. He has been weeping. *He!* nay I am wrong.

O brother! Stand you manifest in this?

I had not thought it, nay had not believed it,

Had it been told me by his bosom friend.

Dry up your tears, fair young Adorio:

I wish to speak to you of Ludowick

And his dead sister.

GEN. Do not sir; the theme

Is sad and irksome. Only let me ask,

Has Ludowick departed—

JUL. Yes, he has.

It gives you joy; you seem to brighten at it!

GEN. Not I: my thoughts were otherwise.

JUL. And mine! [*Aside*]

I did not think my heart could be so heavy.

I must speak with her. If Caridorf has brought

Dishonour on this young and luckless thing,

And now I dare not doubt it, he has done
That which will stab the peace of many, who
Were formed to love and honour him. [*Aloud*] Adorio,
I have an impulse which you know not of,
To speak of Ludowick's sister. Pray you tell,
If, ere the grave enclosed her, there were not
Some blurs and canker spots of calumny
Scattered on her good name? You blush and start!
As if some of her sullied blood had found
Into your veins its way. Yet I knew not
She had another kinsman than poor Ludowick.

GEN. Sir, you amaze me! I have never heard of aught dishonourable in
Genevra.

JUL. Nor known? You droop your head and weep!

Forgive me.

You had a sister. I weep, too, nor scorn it:
I am your friend, am Caridorf's brother, too;
And may seem rudely curious, but am not.

GEN. What means this, sir? These wild words, and these tears.

JUL. Do not observe them. There is in woman's fall,
As in an angel's, so much woe and sadness,
Men must needs weep. Am I mysterious still?
Then know, the portrait on my brother's neck
He calls Adorio's sister, likewise hangs
Round Ludowick's, and there is called Genevra!
She swoons! Nay then there is not yet in her
Wilful abandonment. Thou poor unfortunate!
Have my tears called thee back to life again?
Methinks thy death had left thee far more fair,
And happy.

GEN. Can you stand and look upon me?
Pr'ythee begone; I shall grow mad else. There is fire
You have called up, upon my cheeks, and in
My brain that scorches me. Now you have wronged me;
For when I had the power to weep, I felt not
Half of the burning misery and shame
That now consume me, since my tears are dry.
You have wronged me. Get you gone; for if I look
Upon you more, I choke. 'Tis in my throat,
My heart is there, and strangles me.

JUL.

Alas!

You are not what you seem.

GEN.

Not what I seem!

Ha, ha! wilt drive me mad?—No, I do seem

A tawdry boy, a little pitiful knave,

That serves a difficult master: no, I am

Not what I seem, and therefore get you gone.

JUL. This passion will betray you, hapless girl.

I meant not this, but rather that your heart

Was not so abject as this vile disguise.

GEN. Call it not vile nor abject! Did not *he*

Will I should wear it? Wherefore should I complain?

It shall be followed by a better. Hark you,

If you would not have murder on my hands:

Pr'ythee be secret, and betray me not

To Ludowick—I faint!—Ho, Caridorf!

JUL. Thou wild and broken-hearted girl! And this

Is man's work! this my brother's!—a sorry conquest!—

A poor weak woman's wronged and broken heart! [*Exit, bearing her off*]SCENE 2: *A road side; mountainous country. Enter Ludowick and Philibert.*

PHIL. Excuse me, captain, do you mean to finish

The rest o' the ride on foot? Plague on these horses,

These thick-shanked casters, that are weak i' th' hams;

And a plague on cavalry soldiers: they do ride

As if a Dutch hackhorse were an Arab courser,

And they were astraddle on a Northwind. Captain!

LUD. Well sir, what now?

PHIL.

I beg your pardon, sir,

My feet.

LUD. I understand you, sirrah. You—

You will not walk. Begone, and seize the first

Horses you meet with. I'll indemnify. [*Exit Philibert*]

How grim, and comfortless, and dismal, Heaven!

This earth thou lookest on! and full of woe,

Wrong, grief, and falsehood! Yet methinks, that Heaven

Herself takes share in causing all its ills,

Since it is wrong and falsehood unto nature,

To cut the beautiful and virtuous off,

Josc. [*Aside*] But that I am
Not superstitious nor extravagant,
I'd swear it was a spirit: and 'tis said,
When such appear, as sometimes surely have,
Flesh trembles at them, and the blood grows cold,
The hair itself instinct! I feel no horror.
By heavens, I'll call it by the name—'twere best—
Ludowick!

Josc.

Firm, flesh and bone; thy shoulders testify it.
Zounds, man, we thought thee dead! Why now 'twill be
A merrier time.

Josc. How sir! with only this abated grief,
Say you, you've heard it all?

LUD.

She's dead.

Josc. Dead! Never tell me that,
Unless you smile on't.

LUD. I have known you, friend,
A satirist, half cynic; but you never
Were known to scoff at misery.

Josc. By heaven,
I'll not believe it.

LUD. Are you from Vienna,
And do not know my sister's dead?

Josc. I'd give
Some seven years of my life if dead she were,
Or had died long ago.

LUD. This is beyond
The rule of manners and humanity.

Josc. Oh, then I see that I must speak with you,
Into your ears must pour a harsher tune
Than ever war's grim friends have sung to them.
But first, whence come you?

LUD. From the barony, Caridorf.

Josc. Ha! Caridorf! And heard you nothing there?

LUD. I heard that she was dead.

Josc. From whom, from whom?

LUD. From the young baron's page.

Josc. Saw you that page?—

No, no—I know you did not; why should I ask?
We were sworn friends.—Come, draw aside with me,
And think of God and mercy while I speak.
Your sister lives.

LUD. Thank God!

Josc. Nay, do not so:
In you such piety were atheism.

Now be a man, and recollect yourself.

LUD. Am I a dog, that you should torture me?
Speak to the point.

Josc. Dishonour has been busy
With all the former glory of your house.

LUD. Dishonour!

Josc. And the evil tongues of men
Point at your sister.

LUD. Scorching leprosies
Wither the tongue that lightly speaks of her!
Dishonour! and my sister! O my soul!
Another man for coupling of the words,
Had met his death.

Josc. And what should be his doom,
That wrought this ruin? and on the heavenly brow
Of your lost sister stamped, for men to scoff at,
The badge of just and everlasting shame?

LUD. He lies that says it, lies in his throat beyond
The foulness of a fiend. Aye, draw, and strike me.
Were it in holy writ, I'd say 'twas false.

Josc. Well, well, but I'm a fool: you have good cause
To rave. I tell you it is true, true, true.
Last night she fled Vienna—Ludowick,
Had I less love for you I could not say it—
She fled Vienna in disguise, and with
A man I held as dear as you, but now
Blow all the memory of his friendship from me,
And hold him villain and my enemy.

LUD. Who was it?

Josc. Young Caridorf.

LUD. Fool, fool! and I—
But, friend, the knowledge of her death unmanned me:
I did not even see him. Yet, you mistake:
There came no one with Caridorf but his page.

Josc. And that page was Genevra. Nay, hold back.
'Tis but a short ride to the castle: I have below,
Circling the hill, fresh horses: we will thither.
But first I'll tell you that this lordling's life
Is forfeit for a murder in duello;
Even now the emissaries of the law
Are in pursuit. I have misled them, for
I hoped to screen Genevra from the view;
When that's effected, let him die.

LUD. Amen—

But not by the law; that is too merciful:
Fifty revenges by the law are, poor,
Flat, little to one vengeance by the sword! [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 3: *A room in Caridorf's castle. Enter Caridorf.*

CAR. Whether it be that Lillio's dying curse
Sticks to my soul, like burning wax, there scorching
Every good thought to an abomination,
And causing every trivial circumstance
Without, to grow a monster in the mind;
Or whether it be some palpable reality,
To be observed and weighed by other men,
I have no judgement to decide; but this
Is clear as daylight: she was in his arms,
Her own clasped round his neck, though in a swoon,
Which is an artifice with wanton women,
And seldom real; then he was in tears,
Shedding hot drops upon her face and neck,
And, well I know, young, thoughtful boys like him,
Woo, aye, and win, too, more by tears than smiles.
That he has ferreted out her sex, that, too,
Was proved by his embarrassment and manner,
The start and fearful look when I approached,
And, more than all, the treacherous scarlet blush,
Which ever denotes a hot and plenteous blood.
Then on the picture [*Taking out a miniature*] how he gazed and fed,
How stared and started! yet said not a word!
This also speaks: had he been truly honest,
He had said 'twas like Adorio. [*Enter Agnes*] So, sister!
Thou art not merry. Faith, this page and I
Have brought a winter with us; all grows black
And sober.

AGNES. Yes, you have made us melancholy,
Chiefly because your news has driven away
Our merry captain. I could hate this page,
This mournful gentleman for all his sorrows,
Did he not mind me much of Ludowick.

CAR. Ah! does he so?

AGNES. Yes, do you not see it?
They're very like, I'm sure you must have seen it.

CAR. Not I; I never saw your Ludowick.

AGNES. He is handsomer than Ludowick, but fitter
To hold the distaff than to wear the sword;

A jerked girl, a pale-faced, bashful thing,
A mere sweet puppet, swung on wires and moved
By clockwork; odd; my life! he is bashfuller
Than a wooed girl, and hides himself in corners,
Blushing when one looks after; when he blushes,
He is very pretty, and more resembles Ludowick,
Looking fair enough to be the captain's sister.

CAR. [*Aside*] Death on the captain! will all find this out,
They are so amazingly alike? [*Aloud*] Come, kiss me,
Fair sister, and when sometime in after life—
It may be I'll be dead and gone—you are called
Young Ludowick's wife, and learn to kiss with him,
Say to him, in your kindness, that your brother
Was one that could have loved him had he known him,
And would not wilfully have done him wrong;
Say to him that a rash and foolish passion
Might have wrought ill, and that a swaying demon
That scowled down ever his better thoughts within him,
And made his very soul a slave to folly,
Forbade all penitence and reparation:
Say to him also, that, had such things been,
And Caridorf had wronged him, Caridorf's self
Had well revenged him.

AGNES. I do not understand you, brother,
Unless you are philosophising; and I hate
Philosophy. Tell this yourself to him,
When he returns.

CAR. I may not then behold him;
I shall depart before that hour. How now? [*Enter Philibert*]

PHIL. My lord, I beg your pardon from my soul;
But I am galled with travel, horribly
Oppressed with villain horses. With your leave,
This from the Captain Ludowick. [*Presents a letter*]

AGNES. Philibert!

PHIL. My lady!

AGNES. Where did you leave your master?

PHIL. Some twenty mile

Afar, and by this time some twenty more.

[*Aside*] I can lie by the league when I am bidden.

CAR. [*Aside*] Hum, scrawling fool, I understand his drift, though Couched in such pretty and ambiguous phrase.

Here, knave, mount horse, and tell your noble lord

I'll do the office that he asks me here.

'Bye, sister. [*Exit*]

AGNES. Did he send no word to me?

PHIL. No, not a word, my lady, not a word:

And sure he is spavined with so many woes,

Windgalled and foundered with so much distress

Of mind and body; for your true Dutch nag, [*Exit Agnes*]

Is such a botch as a carpenter can make

Of a four-legged trestle. Basta!—then I'm done;

I am not given to soliloquizing. [*Exit*]

SCENE 4: *On the banks of the Danube. Enter Schwartz and three Robbers.*

FIRST ROB. Captain Schwartz, I hear a foot.

SCHW. Scout it then, thou ass-eared rascal.

FIRST ROB. Thou ass-mouthed rascal! for all thou art captain. Truly, one had better hear like an ass, than talk like an ass. [*Exit*]

SECOND ROB. Well put, captain Schwartz.

SCHW. Never a whit: that is the best he is capable of; he uses his tongue better than his dagger, and were the noisy member once scabbarded, he would go unarmed. What booty hast thou taken, Joseph?

SECOND ROB. I have stolen nothing but a smock and a petticoat; but I have done that with the owner will bring a recompense from the parish.

SCHW. If thou hadst not such a gorgon visage on thy dromedary shoulders, I would have thee apparelled like a gentleman, and send thee as a taxation among womankind. And thou, Faustus?

THIRD ROB. I have physicked a tailor for some loose habits. I watched his shop, moreover, when he went to take measure of his neighbour's wife, for a holyday suit; and made merchandise with the 'prentice in his money-box.

SCHW. Excellently well done. But, at the master's return, how is the 'prentice to fare?

THIRD ROB. You shall hear. We robbed the box, and went snacks in the profits. Furthermore, to save the 'prentice's bacon, we counselled that I should bind him hand and foot; so that when the master returned, he, after making an horrible outcry, was to swear he was knocked down and bound fast while the shop was robbed before his eyes. I bound him, and as soon as

I had him in limbo, icod, I robbed him of his share of the chinks, and left him to suck his thumbs.

SCHW. Better still. Thou art naturally a witty rascal; but thou hast one fault, which, if thou amend not, will bring thee to dishonour and the bastinado: for what says the canon of our craft? *Let there be honour among thieves, that the character of the vocation suffer not.* What now, ears? [*Enter First Robber*]

FIRST ROB. To ambush, to ambush! Here comes a roystering gentleman, making love to the flowers, and speaking to himself, like one that's conning a hard speech for his mistress's ears. [*Exeunt. Enter Caridorf*]

CAR. My soul is filled with black and hideous thoughts,

Painful perplexity, and racking doubts,

Gnawing suspicion of Genevra's truth,

Since that same boy, my brother, crosses me,

Hangs down his head, and blushes as he passes;

Is seen here hastening to Genevra, there

Gliding by stealth away. Oh, I am pained,

Struck to the heart. It is most possible,

Though most unworthy 'twere, the change; for she

Who has fallen once, has roused a devil in her,

That ever after holds temptation to her.

I had thoughts of wedding and of owning her;

But, till this doubt be passed or satisfied,

Must play the Argus.—For this frantic captain,

This is the spot, and this well-nigh the hour,

I know not what. 'Tis said, there are braves here—

I would not harm him, but enforce his absence

Till these distracting doubts be o'er and ended:

I would not. [*Enter Schwartz and three Robbers*]

ALL. Stand! Your money, or your life!

CAR. Good rascals, please you, back from me a little,
And let me speak with you—back, back, I say.

ALL. Kill, kill him, kill him! He has drawn on us!

CAR. Good rogues, stand off. What would you have with me?

ALL. Money, money!

SCHW. Money, foolhardy man.

FIRST ROB. Money! We bid you draw your purse, and devil!
You draw your sword!

SECOND ROB. Money! We'll dig for it
In your heart.

THIRD ROB. Money! We'll coin it from your blood.

ALL. Money!

CAR. Why then, you clamorous dogs, have done,
You harpy bloodsuckers, I've money for you.
Who's here the captain rascal?

SCHW. I am he.

CAR. Give me your hand. Are you a cutthroat knave,
The veriest villain and lawbreaker here?
If so, here's money for you; more, more, more,
Money for all: you see I am a friend.

SCHW. A friend! A devil! A goose with golden eggs:
And if I did not think you could lay more,
I'd rip your guts, and make a mine of them.

CAR. Know me better. I give you gold, and have
Some more in trust, which you must labour for.
You, the chief, rascal, what's your name?

SCHW. Schwartz, Schwartz,
Not rascal; Captain Schwartz, and that's my name.

CAR. Well then, brave captain, valiant captain, have you
Never a cavern, cabin, or dark hole,
Where you could keep a prisoner for me?

SCHW. Wouldn't you rather have him murdered?

CAR. No;
I'll hold that man my enemy who dares
Touch him too rudely.

SCHW. Well, we'll dungeon him.
We have a pretty place or two for lodging.
A bandage o'er his eyes will do no mischief,
And may prevent it. Where is he?

CAR. Close at hand.
Take you your men, and loiter in the bushes,
Keeping strict watch; and when you see a man
Here meet me, and behold, as you will straightway,
We join in combat, then rush out and seize him.
Take heed till we are joined, or you may chance
Some of you lose your ears.

SCHW. Oh, never fear it.
What, five to one, and talk of losing ears!
Then we were asses.

CAR. Pr'ythee, hide yourselves;

CAR. Nor shall, Heaven help me.—Marry, I admire
Your Spartan brevity, and frugal wit,

That puts your syllables in frowns, your words
In oratorical gestures.

LUD. Peace, be dumb!—
Here in your ear: for your foul villainy,
So rank and damned, the earth grows sick at it,
And I lack words to call it by a name,
I do not ask the common reparation;
But I will slay you first, and afterwards
Think of Genevra.

CAR. You speak riddles to me.

LUD. Liar and slave! this then reveals them, this
To your heart, and think Genevra stabs. [*They fight. Enter Schwartz and
Robbers, who disarm and pinion Ludowick*] Rogues! dogs!
Villains! Unhand me, give me back my sword.

SCHW. Why, now you roar: will you be gagged?

LUD. Ho, rescue!

Caridorf, rescue! You are yet unbound:
As you are a gentleman, rescue, rescue me,
And give me vengeance! O thou coward cur!
I see it.—Nay, do not bind mine eyes. As you
Are men, or devils, a minute let me go,
A little minute: It is a brother asks
Vengeance for a wronged sister.

SCHW. Ha, ha, ha!

An' you had looked as well to her, as we
Will look to you, there had been no need of it.
[*Exeunt Schwartz and Robbers with Ludowick, bound, blindfolded, and
gagged. Enter Joscelin*]

Josc. I sure heard clashing swords.—Ha! what is this? Caridorf!

CAR. O my good friend! [*Aside*] Plague and madness!
Must I be crossed by every fool I know.

Josc. Your good friend. Pause upon the word. Time was
You called me such, and truly. Pass that now,
And first inform me where is Ludowick?

CAR. I know none such.

Josc. Eh! Then I am mistaken:
He gave me the slip.—Sir Caridorf.—

CAR. Excuse me;
My duty at the castle not permits
Delay with you. I will receive you there. [*Exit*]

Josc. Stay, stay!—Curse on his conscious villainy,
This is the man I called my dearest friend,
And loved as such, and as an honest man;
And now he shrinks before me like a dog,
Or other brute, whose boldness cannot stand
The inquisition of a true man's eye.
I'll be with him anon; but first for Ludowick,
To put a bridle on his rasher rage;
With him to counsel how to teach the world,
That though the villain, girded round with friends,
Armed in proof, in walls of steel locked fast,
Scoffs fear away, the Avenger comes at last! [*Exit*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I: *A Room in the castle. Enter Genevra and Julio.*

GEN. Follow me not good Julio: I am
So wretched and abandoned to my fate,
That I'll no comfort; no, your kindness is
Vexatious to me.

JUL. Do not make it so.
Can I behold your sufferings, and make
No effort to abate them?

GEN. Leave me, sir.
Think you I can look on you and not feel
How doubly bitter grief if made by shame?
Oh, you mistake your kindness when you speak,
And do me wrong; your words, meant salutary,
Are darts and poison.

JUL. Yet to live in shame—
Pardon me, that I am rude and coarse of speech—
To be resolved and accessory to
Continued shame, and struggle not to break
The spell that binds you, and regain your state.

GEN. Oh, cease!

JUL. To make by fatal wilfulness,
That which is sad, dishonourable.

GEN. Cease!
There are so many smarting gashes here,

There needs no more.

JUL. But they are ulcerous,
Indolent to impression, and must have
Some wholesome caustic ere they heal. Genevra,
I do conjure you by the fame you've lost,
By th' wished redemption of your ruined name,
By all your hopes of yonder frowning Heaven,
And by the misery of your honoured brother,—

GEN. Ah, there's the dagger that stabs more than all.

JUL. Then by his misery, by his madness, too,
When he has had the dark intelligence
Of what's befallen his sister, by the tears
Of one that would do service to you, fly,
Break the vile chains that knit you to my brother,
And make one effort for redemption.

GEN. Nay, what were flight unto Genevra now,
When all her infamy is left behind?
Could flight or death but drown the memory
Of evil deeds, who would not fly or die?
The grave, the last, the silent receptacle
Of sorrow, will not bury our shame with us;
That, though the body's dead and hid from view,
Like some unquiet ghost, lives ever on
To mock our epitaphs with reproaches.

JUL. Still 'tis worse,
Living, or lingering on the spot, to have
A thousand voices trumpeting our shame.
One means alone can fetter slander's tongue,
And cleanse the scutcheon of your family;
That means seclusion puts into your hands.
Have you not seen my brother cold at times,
Meeting your passion with a peevishness,
Speaking unkindly, or unkindly silent?
Fly, and regain his love; seem lost to him,
And all his heart returns, with much remorse,
And wishes to repair his injuries. [*Enter Caridorf, behind*]

GEN. Oh, do not urge me to be false to him. [*Exeunt Genevra and Julio*]

CAR. False! False to him! To whom? To Caridorf?
Was't that they said? Not urge me to be false!
Ha, ha! is this the canting moralizer,

The marvellous, saint-like, Heaven-sent cherubim,
 Set down by dotage as a paragon
 For elder brothers to take note on? Hell!
 That I should stain my erring hand with blood,
 Make forfeit, infamous forfeit of my life,
 To prove how much I loved this wanton imp!
 This mournful hypocrite, that can shed all day
 Measures of tears in memory of her honour,
 Yet court so readily dishonour! So,
 I'll fit you, devil! [*Enter Joscelin*]

Josc. Stay, stay!

CAR. Damnation!

Thou meddlesome fool, what wilt thou here?

Josc.

O sir,

I'll answer you. You would not have me here;
 No, no—your gates were very closely barred,
 And manned by some uncivil myrmidons,
 Whom I have beaten, an' you like it. Stay;
 By heavens, you go not, shall not.

CAR.

Shall not?

Josc.

No,

You shall not go, till I am satisfied.

Dost know me, sir? I am called Joscelin,
 A man that has had many friends, and lived
 To find him that was honoured most of all,
 An arrant scoundrel.

CAR.

Ho, within there!

Josc.

Yes,—

Call forth your slaves: a villainous scoundrel, sir.
 Grow mad: I laugh to see it, and had rather
 Suppose you brave than honest. What you did not,
 Not much regard Geneva, but you worked
 Your hellish magic round her, to transform
 Her beauty to a leprosy of shame!
 You could not rest in the commons, but must break
 Into the gardens of the nobles! could not
 Attempt some guarded fortress, but besieged
 A friendless, unprotected citadel!

CAR. Ho, slaves! [*Enter several Servants*]

Josc. Call them: I'll shame you to them. Where
Thy victim, villain?

CAR. Seize this lunatic,
This furious fool.—What, are ye cowards all?—
Seize him. [*They seize and disarm him*]

Josc. As weak and profitless as mine
Be thy right hand, when the Avenger comes!
What, think ye I am alone, misjudging fool?
Look to thyself: if man foregoes revenge,
There are bolts and arrows in the incensed Heaven,
Will find and pierce thee!

CAR. Bear him away; off! Lock him up, nor heed
His frantic outcries.—Meddlesome fool!—[*Exeunt Servants, with Joscelin*]
[*Enter a Servant*] What now?

What would you here?

SERV. Good my lord, the baron is ill,
The surgeon says, nigh dead.

CAR. Begone, away. [*Exit Servant*]
A father! fathers must die.—Well now I'll after.
[*Enter another Servant*]

SERV. My lord.—

CAR. Speak, sirrah; quick, and begone.

SERV. Sir, there's a strange and savage-looking man
Craves entrance here on matters of importance.

CAR. 'Tis Schwartz. Admit him! 'Tis well thought on. Death!
This insolent villain! But these conspirators—
Have after them. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 2: *A wicket, outside the castle gate. Enter several Officers.*

FIRST OFF. Now, my good fellows all, stand back, I beseech you, while I
knock me a gentleman's knock on the gate.

SECOND OFF. Why a gentleman's knock, good master Grom?

FIRST OFF. Thou art but a simple fellow, friend Peter: I knock me a
gentleman's knock to gain admittance. There is an old word says, *Open locks,*
whoever knocks; but I never knew that to hold good of a constable or a
creditor. [*Knocks*]

SECOND OFF. I am assured this lord Caridorf is very bloodthirsty.

FIRST OFF. Truly thou art right there, or he had never slain signor Lillio.

SECOND OFF. Therefore it behooves us to draw our toasting-irons on him, or he may do us a mischief.

FIRST OFF. Pr'ythee keep thy sword in his scabbard, or he will scare thee into a fit of discretion. [*Knocks*] Soho, here, good master porter. [*Enter Bullet, behind the wicket*] Good morrow, goodman fellow What's-your-name.

BUL. The same as my father's only son's. What's your will, fellow, you with the unsoured face?

FIRST OFF. My will is to be your very good friend; and therefore open to me.

BUL. What, my purse? If thou art a beggar, show me thy back, and begone; for every dog in this neighborhood is a gentleman's, and has been taught to abominate beggars.

FIRST OFF. Thou art a saucy knave. I am a gentleman. Open to me.

BUL. Then verily thou art a gentleman cutthroat; and I will open nothing on thee but a battery of blunderbusses.

SECOND OFF. Truly, master Grom, we had better begone. Methinks I see in yonder window the glimmer of a musketoon.

FIRST OFF. Be silent, fellow.—I am an officer, villain.

BUL. An officer! If thou art an officer of the army, thou mayest go aforaging elsewhere; for we have neither wine nor women suitable for a barracks; get thee to the woods, and bivouac. If thou beest an officer of the church, know then we have no tithes for thee, and are well skilled in the graces of meals without thy reverend assistance. If thou art—

FIRST OFF. An officer of the law, sirrah; and I will attach you for resistance of the law, if you let me not in.

BUL. Surely I have a wholesome dread of all officers of the law. Whom seek ye?

FIRST OFF. The younger lord Caridorf.

BUL. And what do you want with him, good fellow? What has he done? And what will you do with him?

FIRST OFF. He has killed a man in duel; and by the law of the land, which adjudges the survivor duellist to death, his head is forfeited. Therefore, let us in.

BUL. He has killed a man?

FIRST OFF. Aye.

BUL. And therefore you must punish him according to law?

FIRST OFF. Yes.

BUL. Then I will refer you to a rascal that has killed more men than ever any one undertaker has buried. Go catch him, punish him, good officer.

FIRST OFF. Who is this wretch that has killed so many?

BUL. Death, officer, Death; this wretch is called Death. Why do you not punish him according to law?

FIRST OFF. Thou art a fool, fellow.

BUL. What was this man master Caridorf hath killed?

FIRST OFF. A gentleman, a young nobleman of wealth and power.

BUL. A gentleman! Then why should such rogues as you lament him? One gentleman being dead, there is chance for one rascal to take his place; and therefore, fellow, get you gone, and become a gentleman.

FIRST OFF. Open the gate, ass, or we will break it down.

BUL. I beseech you make no noise: the old baron lies ill on his deathbed.

FIRST OFF. We cannot help that. Open, or we break it down. Come on, brothers.

BUL. Off, ye braggadocio rascals! ye manacle villains! I'll teach you a riddle—I'll riddle you, faith. [*Showing a blunderbuss*]

FIRST OFF. Villain, I'll have your ears for this. Come on, you coward knaves. [*Excunt the other Officers*]

BUL. Cock firelock. Follow your crabs: they march backwards. Say your prayers, for this minute seven bullets are through your heart.

FIRST OFF. I must have a reinforcement. Traitor, your ears are dog's meat. [*Exit*]

BUL. [*Snapping the blunderbuss*] Snap, snap! Thou art a rusty, trusty old villain, without either flint or powder, but horribly formidable. And thou, valiant Bullet, hast, with an empty firelock, and an empty hand, put to flight these officers of the law!—Lord, lord, must these hot-livered lordlings go so far in their iniquities as to take life? Fight a duel! I would sooner fight a devil. This duel is a barbarous monster, and gentlemanly. I thank Heaven Bullet was not born a gentleman. [*Exit*]

SCENE 3: *A room in the castle. Joscelin discovered bound.*

JOSC. Had I some portion of the Hebrew's strength
To burst these bonds, and seek my frantic friend!—
Friend, friend! There's more hypocrisy expressed
In that one word, than in priestcraft, love or virtue.
Ludowick may be a knave; for Caridorf
Had quite as honest and sincere a face,
Yet at the bottom was a cankered villain;
And such a villain! heaven! that thou couldst look
The blackhearted libertine, and not
Smite him with thunder! Much I fear me he

Of Ludowick has ta'en some foul advantage.
Oh, that I could but see this fallen girl,
This lovelorn wretchedness; for I could speak
Such counsel as would shame her passion from her,
Make her hold Caridorf in hate, and pray
For some sharp dagger, to forget herself?
What's this? My wish? Ho, there, Genevra! [*Enter Agnes*]

AGNES. Fiel

Who's this calls on Genevra? Who art thou?

Josc. Most beautiful! And well I understand
How deep the injury that asks revenge
On one she pleads for in a sister's name.—
Lady, I pr'ythee, are you not called Agnes?

AGNES. I am, sir; yet I am ignorant how you
Should know me, being a stranger. Wherefore, sir,
Are you thus bound? Who are you? And why called you me
But now Genevra?

Josc. O sweet lady,
Are you acquainted with that name?—Unbind me;
I do conjure you by a dearer name,
By Ludowick's, that you loose these villain cords,
And let me fly to save him.

AGNES. Save him, sir! From what?

Josc. From murder, it may be; I know not:
But I am sure some danger seeks his life.

AGNES. May Heaven forbid! I will unbind you, sir,
Though I be doing wrong, not knowing you,
Nor wherefore you are here.

Josc. I am a gentleman,
Called Joscelin, and Ludowick's faithful friend,
And, by mine honour, unjustly thus detained.
Thanks, lady, thanks. [*Aside*] I do lament that she
Calls Caridorf brother. [*Aloud*] Tell me, where's the page
That came in company here with Caridorf?

AGNES. Safe, safe. But why is Ludowick in danger?

Josc. I'll tell it anon; speak to me of the page.

AGNES. Perhaps I should not; for I know his life
By some unlucky deed is forfeited.
Are you Adorio's enemy?

GEN. I cannot speak it.
Tears have been orators in many causes,
Winning the boon the tongue has been denied.
I know your soul is not by nature steeled
Against redress of unprovoked wrongs.
Look on me now: think not, because I wear
This shameful mask, I am not Genevra still.
I have seen you sometimes at Genevra's feet:
Genevra now kneels down to Caridorf.
What that was asked by Caridorf was denied
By weak Genevra?

CAR. Rise. We must be gone.
Humility's the organ of deceit.
GEN. Say that these garments shall be thrown away,
And I will go with you—yea, if you please,
Beyond the frontiers of wide Germany.
There's not a clime so bleak and horrible,
Wasted by wintry snows, or parched and burnt
By the hot tropics into sandy wilds,
So barren naught but reptiles dwell therein,
But it shall blossom into paradise,
When Caridorf shall smile.

CAR. Will you be gone?
Or shall I leave you, and betake myself
Alone to these fair deserts? Will you stay
And make acquaintance with our noble dames?
Wilt meet your brother?

GEN. You should not speak thus.
If bitter words must be apportioned to me,
Let them be spoke by enemies, and such
As take delight in venoming the wound
By sorrow and by shame already made.

CAR. Up then, and follow.

GEN. O my lord!

CAR. Remain,
And teach these dogs where Caridorf is found.
Call them—will you not have revenge?—go call them.
So much doth Caridorf lament thy wrongs,
He'll take the hangman for thy approved avenger.

GEN. Something has vexed your temper, or, I know,
You would not speak thus.—Oh, I fear to dwell
Longer in wilful self-abandonment.

CAR. Farewell then.

GEN. Stay! forsake me not, desert me not
To the world's scorn! Stay; I will go with you.

CAR. Ha, ha! this wind of light hypocrisy
Makes the poor tongue a weathercock in change.—
You'll go! Why, where? Why will you go with me?
I am your enemy, your worst one too.
Why should you go with me? I should desert you.
Woman, by heaven, I think thy sex was made,
That, by perpetual playing on his folly,
Man may be always told he is a fool!
Dogs, cats and horses are the fools of man;
And these again have their subordinates;
Yet man, who would be lord supreme of all,
Stoops to the baby sceptre of a woman,
Is wax, which, heated by her breath, is moulded
By her small fingers and fantastic will,
In all shapes antic and ridiculous.

GEN. Alas, my lord!

CAR. Why will you go with me?
Have you the spirit to depart with me
To unknown worlds? Hark—'tis not to seek refuge
In unknown climes where yon fair sun may shine:
The earth's too narrow for our banishment,
Too full of ravenous villainy and shame,
Cutthroats and fools, fair smiling hypocrites,
Unblushing tyrants, and conspirators;
Ravishers, murderers, extortioners;
Liars, and rogues, that will sing amorous songs
Into the ears of him whose throat they aim at;
Silver-tongued wives and mistresses, that shame
The perilous sea with treachery and mischief.

GEN. I never knew you thus.

CAR. Nor shall again;
'Tis but a fit will soon be pacified,
Changed to a calm far more terrifical.
Why lookest thou pale? Why are tears in thine eyes?

Soft traitor! Melancholy hypocrite!
I am weary of thee. [*Exit*]

GEN. I do not reproach him.
Weary!—Well, well.—O wretch! Unhappy fool!
This is the crisis of thy heavy fate.
Now then I go.—Grief, thou art doubly keen,
When shame's thy fellow, crime thine origin! [*Enter Julio*]

JUL. Stay, stay!

GEN. I was about to seek you.

JUL. Alas!

Did not my brother part from you even now?
In wrath, too?

GEN. Speak not of that. No, not in wrath.

JUL. I fear 'twas so. He passed me with a frown,
And seemed to shun me.

GEN. Sir, I have thought upon your counsel,
And have resolved to seek a nunnery
If you will be so good to furnish me
With fit apparel and an escort.

JUL. I will be
Myself your escort; and, a mile from hence,
Will put you in charge of an old holy monk,
By whom you shall be carried to the convent.

GEN. I thank you; Heaven shall bless you for your trouble.
[*Enter Caridorf, behind*]

JUL. Meet me tonight upon the Danube's banks,
As early as occasion may permit,
Under the rock, whose cloven base receives
The passing wherries from the further shore.
I have a boat concealed shall ferry you,
Myself the oarsman, o'er the shadowy tide.

GEN. I know the place; you may expect me there. [*Exit with Julio*]

CAR. Under the rock!—upon the Danube's bank!
Expect her? No; expect an evil fiend
Will worry thee to death! Ha, ha!—
This burning coal that lies upon my brain,
Excites me to a madman's or a devil's deeds.
Burn on, burn, burn, accursed flame! and thou,
The ravenous worm that gnaws upon my soul,
Cease not thy banquet!—Now I am calm again,—

The calm that gathers on a fevered head,
Tingling with bells, and singing with winged insects,
Dubious, obscure, and full of fantasies.

This boy—he was quite righteously begotten,
And I believe 's my brother; but what of that?

Then he was schooled by a cowed paternoster,
And I believe was chaste; but what of that?

When I, so underneath my eye, observe

His virtue and his brotherhood cast off

At the lewd glances of my—ha, ha! my what?

It has no name, none so ridiculous.

Upon the Danube?—SCHWARTZ!—I am agreed.—

Or in the Danube: drowning cools the blood.

So ho, here, Schwartz!—Then will our race be done,

Our name extinguished and no more remembered.

Ho, Schwartz!—[*Enter a Servant*]

SERV. My lord—

CAR. Well, how now?

SERV. Sir, your father's dead.

CAR. Why then we'll bury him. His sons will follow.

Have you seen never a black-faced, gloomy man,

With shaggy whiskers, that's in wait for me?

SERV. That savage-looking man, my lord? [*Enter Schwartz*]

CAR. Away. [*Exit Servant*]

Here, rogue, here's gold; come, here's a bag of it,

Heavy enough to buy a dozen souls.

SCHW. Clink, clink! Exceeding musical! Clink, clink!

A dozen! Souls are cheaper; this would buy

A regiment of souls. What's to be done?

Well, well, how many to be pinked or drowned?

Some damsel to be ravished, or got rid of?

I am here, and ready. Come, what's to be done?

CAR. Murder.

SCHW. But one? I'll do it. But who, my lord?

CAR. The boy called Julio.

SCHW. Your brother?

CAR. Aye. Art frightened?

SCHW. Frightened! Godamercy! Ha, ha!

At murdering of a man? Why 'tis my business:

I'll kill your brother, sister, friends and all,

Yourself, too, if you pay well. Frightened! Thunder and lightning!
You may be frightened yourself; 'tis you that kill him:
I am but the agent, nothing but a tool;
I never killed my brother in my life.

CAR. This rogue has less ferocity than I,
Having less cause for fury.

SCHW. Frightened! Ha, ha!
Wilt fix a manner, whether by stab or rope,
By fire or water, poison or starvation?
Or any other way?

CAR. Vex me not, dog:
Do it humanely. Watch for him tonight,
Under the rock upon the Danube's bank.
Be early there. The ferry rock. Begone. [*Exit Schwartz*]
My father's dead: I am glad of it, for I
Would not have shocked the old man's doting heart
With the sight of his Joseph's bloody garment.
Then, as for Ludowick;
Say I have dishonoured his proud house and old;
I make him master of a new one, fresh
In blood and fame, as at its origin,
These evil acts being hidden from men's eyes.
Say I destroy his sister: better still:
I take a thorn of infamy from his side,
A sister abject, wanton, and dishonoured,
And plant therein a sister of my own,
As fair, as sensible, and far more honest.
Then for myself—there's little to be said;
I am proscribed, outlawed, and doomed; abandoned
By all that I held honest and I loved,
Yet feel not much forlorn.—I'll stand to it,
Though Heaven in wrath, speaking abhorrence strong,
Howl in my ears, *O fool! thou doest wrong!* [*Exit*]

ACT V.

SCENE I: *A room in the castle. Enter Geneva.*

GEN. Come down, old night, with all your gloomy shadows,
Cloaking with clouds this idly smiling earth;

Ye stars! be hidden, or in your broad orbs
 Lock up all night, making night doubly night.
 Heaven should be angry or be pitiful;
 Yet not a mist is in the odoriferous air;
 No growling thunder rolls along the hills;
 All is sweet peace, all but my heart, my heart.—
 Was that a step?—I should not be a coward;
 There is no wrong in this deceptive flight.
 Judge, heaven! I had not left him, though all men
 Were turned his enemies, no, I had not left him,
 But that I weary him, I weary him!
 Anger, ill humour, sullen peevishness,
 Neglect, reproach, I could have borne them all,
 And wooed a gentler bearing with my own.
 'Tis just; I am, or I should be, content,
 But that I weary him, I weary him!—
 Hist, hist! I must begone. By this, young Julio waits
 At the appointed spot.—O Caridorf,
 Could I but say and hear a kind farewell! [*Enter Caridorf*]

CAR. Why do you start from me, Genevra?

GEN. Sir!—

CAR. This agitation much surprises me. [*Aside*]
 Not yet perfected in hypocrisy. [*Aloud*]
 Why speak you not? Nay, now, you are angry with me.
 Come, kiss me. I was rude with you.

GEN. O my lord!

CAR. Nay, nay, forget it.

GEN. Did you know how happy
 One kind word makes me, you would always speak thus.
 I have forgot it: one such look can purchase
 Oblivion of all harsh, unfeeling words.

CAR. [*Aside*] Soft-hearted fury!—[*Aloud*] Go, array yourself,
 This cloak being cast, in your accustomed weeds.

GEN. My lord!

CAR. I say it: I remember, too,
 My former promise.

GEN. Heaven forever bless me!
 These are the first blest, blissful tears I have shed
 For many days, and I have many shed.
 Now let or sorrow, wrong, or death assail you;

I sharing them, the burden will be light:
The ruffian's knife can never pierce thy breast,
When a fond, grateful heart is made its shield.

CAR. Away, and quickly. [*Exit Genevra*]

What a glorious angel

She should be, were these idle accents true!
Accursed fiend! that, in that beauteous shape,
Coverest an heart more treacherous than fire,
More corrupt than the dead man's leavening flesh,
And more malignant than the serpent's tooth!
Death is slight punishment; I had adjudged it
Merely to end her sufferings, but now
Doom it to end her wickedness; for she
Must not be left in the world's wanton lap,
To grow more tainted with her infamy.
My brother, too, poor lad! it was not well
To cut him off in his green, hopeful youth,
For his first crime. But grieving comes too late:
The deed's adoin'—let it go on, while I
Forget his brother doomed him thus to die! [*Exit*]

SCENE 2: *On the Danube. Enter Schwartz and Robbers.*

FIRST ROB. I tell you, Captain Schwartz, there can no good come of it.

SCHW. And I tell you, fellow, that's neither your business nor mine. Get you gone, Faustus, to the bushes. Look to the path from the castle, and when you hear a footstep, give the whistle. [*Exit Third Robber*] Who have you left with the prisoner?

FIRST ROB. Jeffry and Bravossa. I am thinking, captain, 'tis an infernal shame to keep a soldier in limbo. I tell you what of this Captain Ludowick, he is a noble gentleman, and will break his heart, if you let him not go.

SCHW. Let him break his heart, and be damned then, as quick as may be; the sooner the better: 'twill save charge.

FIRST ROB. Charge! I am sure his lodging costs nothing: a hard rock in a damp cave should not be rated high; and as for his food, he eats nothing. Before heaven, my heart aches to look on him. I watched him last night; and he did so moan and curse his fate, and begged me so hard for one day's liberty—think of it! only one day—to revenge himself and his sister; and then he swore by his honour and the saints, he would come back, and be a willing prisoner forever.

SCHW. Let him swear. What care I? I tell you what, fellow, take care; you are making friends with that devil, conscience.

FIRST ROB. Conscience! I scorn the word; what has a robber and cutthroat to do with conscience? I trust a man may pity another, without having aught to do with conscience.

SCHW. Pity him then as much as you like, and there let the matter rest. What says thy conscience to killing this young lord Julio?

FIRST ROB. Says! I tell you I have nothing to do with conscience. But my soul—

SCHW. Pr'ythee, say nothing about soul, unless you desire to think of damnation.

FIRST ROB. My heart then—

SCHW. Thy heart is like a rotten tree, or rather thou art like a rotten tree, whose heart is hollow: thou art a hollow-hearted villain. Speak not of thy bowels neither, for thou hast none—they were yearned away over thy neighbor's gold; nor of thy brain, for that was sparingly given to thee, and should not be lightly parted with.

FIRST ROB. Let me say then that I think this will be the bloodiest deed I have ever put hands to. Be hired by a man to murder his own brother! That is damnable, that is diabolical!

SCHW. Put the damnable and diabolical to signor Caridorf's account; let him answer for it.

FIRST ROB. It is a wicked murder, and we will be damned in it.

SCHW. You have no philosophy, fellow. Look you here: Murder consists of malice, or wilful desire to take life, and of the act or consummation. Now if I kill fifty men—that is, consummate or act—and yet have no malice, the law allows it not murder. Therefore, we do no murder in this thing, for we have no malice against this man's life; we desire not that. Secondly, observe you now, the act, or consummation, consists of, first, the actor, which is he that hath malice and kills, and secondly, the weapon he acts with, which, being acted with, is only the agent, or instrument, or means. The law judges not the weapon, which is the agent, or instrument, or means; see you that? The agent is not guilty of murder. Observe now the consequence: we, being not the actor, but merely the agents, the instruments, or the means, are acquitted in law, for we are put in place of the weapon, whereby the actor kills. We are used; and the actor is signor Caridorf, who, being the actor and withal malicious, is the murderer; and whether he be hanged and damned, or not, our hands are clean of unlawful murder.—How stands thy conscience now?

FIRST ROB. Truly they spoiled a lawyer, when they made thee a cutthroat. I feel confirmed, because I am, as it were, an innocent agent, or instrument, or means.

SECOND ROB. Aye, we are but innocent agents, instruments or means.

SCHW. Hark! [*The Third Robber whistles*] Now lurk. [*They retire. Enter Julio*]

JUL. Ah! not here yet! Twice was I here before,
And nothing heard nor saw. 'Tis sure the hour.
I fear some mishap has befallen her.
I have retraced the path, yet met her not.
I'll lay my ear upon the ground, and list:
If chance she comes, her steps will then be heard,
Ringing with distant echoes through the wood.

SCHW. An excellent position!—Now will he have no trouble in falling.

JUL. What's that? Off, fellows! Will you murder me!

SCHW. Close on him.

FIRST ROB. I am a dead man. I knew it would be a damned unfortunate job—and so, 'sblood, I have finished my last job. [*Dies*]

JUL. Villains! stand off.

SCHW. Ye dogs! On him again! Say your prayers, young bawcock; here's for you. Hurrah! Press him closer.—I've touched him a vein! Closer, harder. He faints.—There's for you.—[*Enter Ludowick*]

LUD. Villains! devils! what do you?—To hell with you, wretch! There's largess for you. [*Stabs Schwartz. The others run off*]
Julio, my lad, how is it?

JUL. A little hurt.

I thank you, friend, and Agnes, too, shall thank you.
Had you not come, the knaves had murdered me.

SCHW. The cold plague and the dog-madness light upon all jail-breakers! Villain soldier! You have stopped me in my lawful calling; you have rammed your accursed toaster into my guts; you have stopped my mouth. I gagged you with goodly madras, but you have gagged me with iron. Therefore, say a prayer or two over me, write me an epitaph, and say I died an honour to—my—vo-ca-tion.—[*Dies*]

LUD. Let me bind up your arm.

JUL. Think not of that;

'Tis a mere scratch; a cat could do as much.
I am surprised—I thought you in Vienna.

LUD. Ha, ha! Why then—no—Pr'ythee, let me go.

JUL. Where would you?

LUD. A pretty question of a lover!
To the house, to Agnes. How fares she? How fare all?
Your father?

JUL. He is dead—escaped the sight
Of many woes.

LUD. I am sorry.—And your brother?

JUL. Why do you close your lips, and frown so wildly,
Speaking of him?—He is well.

LUD. I am glad to hear it.
I do desire acquaintance with your brother:
I have heard your brother is an honest man,
A worthy, excellent, honourable brother;
A sample of rare virtues, an example
Of good—damned villainy!—Oh, he *is* your brother!
How comes that so?—Death! Stand I here to talk,
When I am free, free, free for my revenge!

JUL. Where would you go?

LUD. To seek your brother, sir.
I love your brother, yea, I reverence him,
Hold him here in my heart, or would here hold him
With a friend's grasp—and then I would strangle him.

JUL. Alas, alas! Then I must step between.
Stay, sir: my brother—

LUD. Well, what of your brother?
I go to seek him.

JUL. But not yet to find him;
He is gone.

LUD. Gone! Whither?

JUL. This morning he took port
Beyond the river, being pursued.

LUD. His page!

JUL. Fled with him.

LUD. Fare you well, young lord.—Forget me,
Let all your house forget there ever lived,
Whate'er the cause they have for memory,
A wretch so desperate as Ludowick;
And for your sister, whom I— That is over.
Heaven sent a curse, when giving you a brother. [*Exit*]

JUL. O God! what general woe, contention, crime
Spring from this one unhappy deed!—I'll back.—

SCENE 3: *A room in the castle. Enter Caridorf.*

GEN. Away, thou vile disguise!—O my dear lord,
I feel a lightness dancing through my heart,
A most sweet joy, a grateful blessedness,
That makes me doubt it for an ecstasy,
A dream, a trance. Are you ill, my lord? Ah, me!
Your looks are wild. Why gaze you thus? What's that
You hold thus in your hand?

CAR. A medicine
Good against many maladies and ills;
'Tis the true water of that famous Lethe

That men hold fabulous; an antidote
'Gainst broken hearts and stinging consciences;
And will most thoroughly purge licentious bosoms
Of wanton thoughts and criminal desires.

GEN. What mean you?—But I know you jest, my lord.
Come, your stern looks will fright me, make me think
That these poor weeds are not my bridal robe.

CAR. That bridal robe is death's habiliment,
And death must be thy bridegroom, wanton woman!

GEN. Oh, you are ill, my lord! These words are wild.

CAR. Come, sit thee down, let me regard thine eyes;
I see some tears there. Well, let them run on;
Yet can they not wash out this venomous blot,
That has out-cankered Nessus on thy soul.
Why, thou canst weep, I see! and so can I;
See what rash drops are festering in mine eye!
Yet come they not from penitence, like thine;
They are all gall and fire, and charged with poison
More caustic than a serpent's.—I observe
Thy cheek is pallid; oh, but I can see,
Even through its thin and lucid covering,
The aspic worm that has been gnawing it,
And sucking out its juices. Here's a lip,
That once was richer than a honied hive,
Sweeter than manna to an Hebrew's mouth,
And worth, to kiss, a lustre of one's life:
By hell! that foul old alchymist, lechery,
Has quite transmuted it, and now it yields
A noxious gall and insalubrious slime.

GEN. Oh, my good lord!

CAR. What's this? was that thy voice?
Not that discordant, raven-croaking sound?
I recollect me, it was once more sweet
Than silver bells, or sounds that have been drawn
Out of sonorous glass; but that was harsh,
With a soul-vexing dissonance and fury.

GEN. O saints of heaven!
What means this horrible and mad discourse?

CAR. Hist! do not speak. There is a subtle music
In the pied wanton's tongue, can oft cajole

The ears of justice.

GEN. By my hopes of heaven!

CAR. Hast thou then hopes of heaven? Do not deceive
Thy precious soul with too much warranty.
Ha! I have none, no, none, although the sin
Of falsehood be not on me, I have none.
Have a care; that heaven you hope for, has no ears
For the soft lies of wantonness.

GEN. O death!

You brand me with vile epithets of shame.
Wanton! Have I deserved it? and from you?
CAR. I have done you ill; but the same hour that saw it,
Noted me down for ruin; for I love you
With that extravagant spousal of the soul,
That what was ill to you was ill to me:
Yea, for my love was proved by that mad act
That stained my soul with blood. Now—do not speak—
You have destroyed me, body and soul, destroyed me:
You have made this broad and promising world to me
A theatre of shame, despair and horror;
You have made me to be marked with the curse of blood,
And men will quote me in their chronicles,
A fiend and monster, wild, unnatural,
Bloody and horrid;
My life is forfeited, I cannot live;
Men hunt me as a wild beast; I am hemmed in;
And, for I will not you shall live in shame,
You must perforce go with me.

GEN. Be it so:

I fear not death, since life has been to me
A dream of madness.

CAR. Accursed be the day

That saw thee born! O sinful, shameless woman!
I would for thee have done what men had shrunk from—
Died, courted death in his extremest horror,
Been racked, torn piecemeal, been devoured alive—
So thou hadst spared my soul! Let me look at thee:
What, did I take thee for a *cherubim*?
Fool, fool, fool, fool! I see thee now revealed
In all thy devilish deformity,

The dark one's agent, sent on earth to tempt,
With thy false face, deluded men to ruin.
Shall it be?

GEN. Do not kill me!

CAR. What, thou didst not,
Infamous harlot! tempt my brother to thee?
I now am sure that Lillio spoke the truth,
And lied in his death to save thee from my rage.

GEN. Oh, forbear!
Stain not thy soul with innocent blood!

CAR. No innocent blood has stained me; all was foul,
Yea, even the virtuous Julio's was foul.
Woman, thou hast changed me to a fratricide.
If I spared not my brother, shall I spare thee?

GEN. You have not slain him?

CAR. Aye.

GEN. He was innocent! Give me the drug. I have no more to say.
God pardon thee, awake thy senses in thee,
And not avenge these murders on thy soul! [*Exit*]

CAR. Soul, soul! Where is the treasure can repay
The loss of that? Not diadems, nor thrones,
Not multitudinous homage and respect,
Not glory trumpeted by a thousand tongues,
Not gain of the whole world!—Thou worthless clod!
Thou ruinous palace of dead majesty!
Why shouldst thou live, inanimate and curst,
Thy great and high inhabitant being gone?
Rather be razed to thy foundations, and
At once be mixed with thy original dust. [*Offers to stab himself. Enter Julio*]

JUL. Madman! unhappy wretch!

CAR. What, comest thou back
To harrow me before the time? Avaunt! [*He drops his sword, and Julio se-
cures it*]

JUL. Brother, what is this?
Do you not know me?

CAR. I did think thee dead.
Give me my sword.

JUL. What ails thee? There's a paleness,
Ghastly cadaverous, on thy changing face!

CAR. I am not sorry neither thou art spared,
For thou mayest yet, being young and fresh in crime,
Repent thee of this ruin; I rejoice
My fury has not slain thee.

JUL. O my brother!
What words are these? 'Tis true, I have been spared:
I was assaulted by strange, murderous men.
How didst thou know it?

CAR. I set them on.

JUL. Just Heaven!
This is but madness, frightful madness, brother!

CAR. I set them on. 'Tis true, it was in madness:
But brothers should forgive a brother's crime,
And men should be forgiving,—but I am not.
Pr'ythee, avoid me—go; I am not safe.
Repent thee of thy guilt, lest it should hurl thee
Into perdition deep as I am sunk.
Away! Anon there'll be a spectre here
Will fright thee into madness.

JUL. As Heaven shall judge me,
I know no guilt beyond my common frailties.

CAR. Hist!—"Tis not yet.

JUL. Thou didst not seek my life?

CAR. Didst thou hear naught? 'Tis but a passing shriek,
The parting agony—

JUL. Thou didst not seek my life?

CAR. Come, boy, I'll tell thee, since thou wearest thy guilt
With boldness unbefitting to thy years.
There's a malicious devil in thy heart
Has made thee my destroyer, yea, destroyer
Of my unvalued soul: my body's nothing,
The worms may fatten on it; but a foe
Had stopped with its destruction: thou has wreaked
Thy fury upon mine immortal soul.
Speak not to me. I overheard it all.
What, thou would'st fly with her? She goes before thee.
Hark! now!

JUL. I understand thee; but, mistaken,
Misguided man, was it a crime to wish

To draw a wretched girl from sin and shame?

CAR. To plunge her into more? Avoid me, boy:
I am possessed with devils that will destroy thee.

JUL. I fear thee not, rash man. Where is Geneva?
She shall not live thy wretched paramour.

CAR. Nor thine: no, I have taken care for that.

JUL. Madman! what mean you? I have never looked upon her
With aught but pitying and virtuous eyes.

I would have plucked her from thy sinful arms,
To save her from dishonour. [*A shriek without*]

CAR. Hist! 'Tis over now.

Tarry awhile here. Thou shalt swear to that,
And make me blessed. [*Exit Caridorf*]

JUL. 'Twas a dismal cry,
As of one murdered! Ha! this noise and tumult!

The ministers of vengeance at the gates,
The bloodhounds of the law! Fly, Caridorf!

O God! what's this? [*Reenter Caridorf, bearing Geneva dead*]

CAR. Come, swear upon her body:
No holy book that babbling swearers kiss,

Can so secure sincerity. Come, swear;
Swear that thou hast not tempted her.

JUL. O heaven!
What madman hath done this? She is dead!

CAR. Swear, swear;
Swear she is innocent with thee.

JUL. She is;
I would have saved her soul, not plunged it deeper
In guilt.

CAR. Why didst thou urge her fly with thee?

JUL. To save her, and to screen her from men's scorn;
To hide her in a convent, that I might win thee
To do her reparation.

CAR. Boy, I thank thee;
Thou hast ta'en a load of anguish from my breast,
And now 'tis light; thou hast filled my soul with joy;
For more it likes me she is innocent,
And I therefore more in her death condemned,
Than, by her guilt, that I were justified.

JUL. Fly, fly, unhappy, wretched, ruined man!
The emissaries of the law are on thee!
Fly!

CAR. Whither? whither shall I fly? The world
Contains no spot less terrible than this.
Come, gaze on her: she is a noble corse,
A thing that was too beautiful to die,
Too angel-like to fall; yet Lucifer,
With all his beauty and angelity,
Fell, lifeless, too, from heaven. Ye see her thus,
And scarce can think this lovely thing is dust:
Yet dust she is, and, though awhile a soil,
From which all loveliness, like flowers, sprang up,
Scenting the earth with its innumerable odours,
Now is she robbed of all her green sweet buds,
And lies a mass of foul, unfruitful clay.
What, do you shrink before the powerless dead?
There's nothing frightful in the sight to me:
Her cold cheek's more refreshing to my lips
Than icy goblets to a fevered man;
Her hand, albeit 'tis clammy, cold, and stiff,
Strikes no sensitive horror to my heart.—
Ha! the time waxes, and the bloodhounds come.—
Give me my sword, boy, and begone from me.

JUL. Begone thyself, mad, miserable man!
Stay, and an ignominious death awaits thee.

CAR. I know it; let me die where'er I may,
I die an ignominious death. Naught holy,
Reverent nor good shall bless me in my death.
Fiends shall exult at it, angels recoil,
And men remember me but as a plague,
Mortal, and dismal, and to be abhorred.

OFFICERS. [*Without*] Force the doors. He is within here.

JUL. Hark! the officers! Fly, brother, I conjure you.

CAR. Then give me my sword and leave me.

JUL. No, I will not;

I fear your purpose.

OFF. Burst open the doors. [*The doors are forced. Enter Joscelin and Officers*]

Josc. Seize him. O holy saints! Who has done this?
 Dead art thou? Monster! Beast! Barbarian! Devil!
 Didst thou do this? Most mad and bloodstained fool! [*Enter Ludowick, followed by Agnes*]

LUD. Where is this unchained fiend?

AGNES. You shall not strike him;
 He is my brother.

LUD. O living God! Dead, dead!
 Cold, cold and dead!

FIRST OFF. Seize on the murderer.

CAR. Do not crowd on me; let me free awhile:
 I have not wherewithal to do you harm.
 Stand back, good sirs: I have yet to render here
 Some foolish evidences of my grief.
 Ye come to drag me unto punishment
 For Lillio's death; I grant you, it is well;
 And I acknowledge that for that offense
 My life is justly forfeit. But, good friends,
 Here is another of my malefactions,
 Which, both in sinfulness and in punishment,
 Must take precedence of it. I own,
 Here with my God and you as witnesses,
 That I am guilty of this maiden's death;
 That I cajoled her into ruinous love,
 Wound like a serpent round her purposes,
 And when I held her in infatuate spell,
 Crushed her. She was an innocent, but I
 Stained all her purity with crime; she was
 An orphan, without brother, sister, friend,
 Or aught on the broad earth that owned her blood,
 That could direct her in the ways of life,
 Or guard her from the ravisher; but I
 Came forth, and wronged her, and destroyed her. Now,
 If there is one who will avenge her wrongs,
 Here is my heart to write my sentence on.

LUD. God judge between thee and my murdered sister.
 I cannot strike thee.

CAR. None here? Good friends, will none of you be found
 To do this justice on her murderer?
 I think there's one.—Come, let me pluck once more

A deadly resolution from her lips. [*He takes up the disguise, with the little sword concealed in it*]

See here the poor disguise Genevra wore.

Bear with me, sire: I'll call on one of you,

Who is so bound to me, that when I speak

His name, he'll undertake the great revenge.

Now, strike, avenger! [*Stabs himself*] It is Caridorf!

JUL. Alas! alas! my brother!

Josc. He is dead;

Past man's redemption, but not man's forgiveness;

Past pity, yet I weep for him; past hope,

Save that the charity of Heaven allows.—

Thus love, debased from its pure source sublime,

Must live in woe, and end in shame and crime.

FINIS

■

NEWS OF THE NIGHT;
Or, A TRIP TO NIAGARA

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CHARACTERS

MR. PETER AGONY, *uncle to Margaret and Anne*

MR. CHARLES EDDYBRAIN, *in love with Margaret*

MR. NED DOUBTFUL, *in love with Anne*

MR. PETER HA'PENNY, *a poor man*

FIDDLE, *servant to Eddybrain*

BUCKRAM, *a tailor*

JOHN, *a hatter*

NED, *a shoemaker*

NICK, *a barkeeper*

CONSTABLE AND PORTERS

MISS MARGARET AGONY }
MISS ANNE COY } *nieces to Mr. Agony*

MRS. CALICO, *housekeeper to Mr. Agony*

SCENE: PHILADELPHIA.

TIME: EQUAL TO THAT OF REPRESENTATION.

■

ACT I.

SCENE I: *Chestnut St. U. S. Bank. The street, dark. Enter Ha'penny and Creditors.*

HA'P. The devil snatch you all! Pon my soul, Buckram, honest, Buckram, I'll pay you on Monday—Ned, you son of wax, have you no more conscience than to make me a pair of shoes and then dun me to boot?—Was ever man so bedeviled! John, you unfeeling man of felt, lend me a dollar, and I'll pay you, pon my honour I will, I'll pay you o' Monday or when it's convenient. What, Buckram, how's Mrs. Buckram and your merry little cabbage stalks all?

BUCK. Just settle this here small bill, Mr. Ha'penny, and I'll tell you all about 'em.

HA'P. Tom, Dick and Harry! Curse your bill! What, you argue, make me pay for a coat that's out at elbows!

JOHN. Mr. Ha'penny, I'll just say—

HA'P. Why, John, how d'e do? How's your old father?—Put him up for sheriff—I'll vote for him, I swear I will; he shall be sheriff. Nick—

JOHN. I'm tired of waiting, Mr. Ha'penny.

HA'P. And who the deuce told you to wait? Zound, I didn't! Ah, Nick, you're a better friend than to be scaring me with a bill. I hate a bill—it throws me into fits—my doctor says it will kill me—and you, you unfeeling rascals, you are trying to murder me with 'em! Ah, Nick, you're a noble fellow—

NICK. Here's the regular board and bar bill. The old man swears if you don't pay, he'll sue you.

HA'P. Tell the unconscionable rascal, if he does, I'll take The Benefit, and oust him of every penny. Ned, here—be easy—I'll pay you on Monday—just lend me half a dollar, and I'll send you a dozen new customers, I swear I will.

NED. I'm not to be sucked in—I'm up to snuff. None o' that 'ere flummery for me. You 'as had two pair o' boots, three pair o' shoes, and mending as par account, and hasn't paid what I call a penny of the matter.

HA'P. Damn the matter. Your leather has filled my toes full of corns, and curse you, you shall be paid with the crop. [*Enter Fiddle, with men bearing a chest*] Ah, Tony, how d'e do, how's your master?

FID. My name's Fiddle; I don't know you.

HA'P. Ah, you comical rascal, I remember you now? Lend me a dollar, Fiddle, and call round at my lodgings, and I'll pay you and make you drunk.

FID. Tum te ti! You're crazy—

HA'P. To be sure I am, don't you see the rascals are dunning me?

BUCK. But Mr. Ha'penny, concerning this here bill—

NED. As to this little matter—

JOHN. Considering as how this account—

NICK. Just look it over and settle it.

HA'P. You rascal crabs, my name's Pennyless. Let me alone—do you think I a'n't flesh and blood? Won't none of you lend me a five-dollar note? Out upon you, you unmerciful savages, you leeches, you bloodsuckers, you snap-pers, you stingarees? Will you dun me to death?

FID. Ha, ha, ha! I've seen such things in Lon'on but that in a land of liberty a man can't be allowed to take his walk without dunning, 'tis quite shocking! Move on, Mr. fellers. [*Exeunt Fiddle and Porter*]

HA'P. You unchristian men! I have patronized you all, and this is the way you show your gratitude, with your cursed bills! First you demand custom, which is a favour, then you demand payment, which is a greater favour still! Cormorants! you engrossers! you monopolizers! 'Tis contrary to the great American system, which is meant to encourage us in all our lawful doings: but how the deuce can one be encouraged when he has to shell out his pennies to every ugly fellow that may happen to have a bill against him. Tell me that, you unpatriotic rogues, tell me that!

BUCK. If I don't sue you then, may I never wax a thread.

NED. If I don't have you before the squire—

NICK. If I don't—

JOHN. If I don't—[*Enter a Constable*]

CONST. Clear the way thar' gentlemen, till I 'rest that 'ere Mr. Peter Ha'penny, alias Abram Snipe, alias Pennyless Luckless, and some other aliases, at the suit of Peter Agony, broker.

HA'P. The old curmudgeon—I'll be hanged first. Is 't only for debt, constable?

CONST. That's all—So I hope you'll come quietly.

HA'P. Well, if it's only for debt, just take care on pain of an action for defamation, not to cry "Stop thief," and arrest me—when—you can catch me! [*Exit*]

CONST. Are you up to that, my fellow? [*Exit, in pursuit*]

NICK. Did 'you ever see the beat o' that? Gentlemen, that man'll never pay you a cent, 'cause how, he's got no cents. But we can sue him; so I'll go to a squire.

OMNES. Ay, let's go to a squire, and sue him.

SCENE 2: *Eddybrain and Doubtful.*

DOUBT. Then you won't go a travelling after all?

ED. No, I won't. Where's the use? I was going to look for a wife. I can find one at home, a better one and a handsomer one than I could find by looking all the world over, I can by the lord. Ha, ha! I should like to tell you, Ned, but you're such a deep devil, I don't like to trust you, I vow I don't.

DOUBT. And yet you'll tell me; for you are such an abominable tattler, I know you can't keep a secret for an hour. Come, I know half already. I've heard of your sly doings, your climbing over garden walls, your sneaking up blind alleys, your—

ED. Who told you?

DOUBT. You yourself. You couldn't help it. You hinted a vast deal about the sweet creature—the—What d'ye call her? Oh, ay—Anne, Miss Anne Coy—

ED. Zounds, I didn't say a word about her—Anne Coy indeed! Wouldn't give a sixpence for her. But Margaret, the adorable Margaret!

DOUBT. Come, you're joking. Confess—you love the young Quaker?

ED. I don't, I tell you, I don't. What, did dad leave me fifty thousand dollars to spend in sugar-scoop bonnets and snuff-coloured satins?

DOUBT. But you know, you told me once—

ED. That I had a sneaking kindness for her—But she's such a fool, such a yea- and nay piece of simplicity, one can't abide her. No, I'd give her to you—Zounds, I thought you were mad after her, and so did old Agony, for you know he turned you out-of-doors, for making love to her.

DOUBT. No, 'twas for another reason.

ED. Why then, 'twas for making love to Margaret.

DOUBT. To Margaret! You're crazy.

ED. Ha, ha! Well, I pity you, 'pon my soul I do. 'Twas very unhandsome of me to supplant you, wasn't it? Don't grieve severely. Such things happen daily. I knew all about it, you close fellow, I did. I saw what you were after, and I laughed in my sleeve continually—for to tell you the truth, the lady and I understood one another perfectly. Yes, we did—you loved her famously, didn't you?

DOUBT. If I did, may I—

ED. Don't swear, or I won't believe you. I told Margaret about it. She said no, 'twas her cousin Anne you fancied. But, lord, I knew you could never fancy such an innocent lassie as Anne Coy—but I wish you would. I wish you would elope with her. I'm sure she'd go for the asking.

DOUBT. Pish! Why do you talk to me about Anne Coy, and eloping?

ED. Because 'twould be such a convenient thing, but I won't tell you.

DOUBT. Well, good bye.

ED. Stop, I'll tell you—but you won't be jealous?

DOUBT. Jealous!

ED. Why, gad, to tell a lover you are about running away with his mistress, might make him a little jealous, mightn't it? But, Zounds, it can't be helped: 'tis foolish of you to be grieving about it, for, I vow, Margaret and I—

DOUBT. Why the deuce do you talk to me about Margaret? I tell you, I would sooner take physic than her. I hate, despise, destest her.

ED. Don't talk so! She's the divinest creature under the moon! Ned, I'm going to marry her!

DOUBT. And what says her good old uncle Agony? Will he consent?

ED. No.

DOUBT. Why then, farewell to a moiety of her fortune. You know she dare not marry without his consent, until she is too old to marry at all.

ED. Yes, that was her father's will. He was of opinion women were never in their senses under thirty—mere girls—and faith he may have been right, for you know, girls are just as young at twenty-nine as they were at nineteen. But thirty does their business. But curse the fortune—I've come to a resolution I can't wait till the dear soul grows old and ugly—Lord, that a young angel ever should grow old and ugly!—No, Ned, let her fortune go to building a hospital or a new ward to the old one, where unlucky lovers may be housed and cured—I'll do without it. Dad left me fifty thousand dollars and I can do without it.

DOUBT. But how is she to escape? Old Agony, ever since he suspected you, has used all the authority which his brother's will allows him; and his house is no better than a prison.

ED. You stupid fellow, you never read the old plays, where ladies are bundled up into trunks, and carried about like the commoner chattels. You know my boy, Fiddle, I hired him to go a travelling with me. He is the cunningest rogue in town—and with his assistance, a box and two porters, I'll have her to the squire in an hour's time.

DOUBT. Excellent, ha, ha! Excellently ridiculous! She is to be boxed is she? Zounds! She should be boxed soundly, for a young scape-grace, as she is.

But softly—how is she to be sent away? Who's to manage that? Has she let Anne into the secret?

ED. No; Anne's not to be trusted. She's all obedience to her uncle, and is such a deuced prude, she'd go blab instantly.

DOUBT. Ha, ha! Tonight, did you say?

ED. Directly.

DOUBT. Excellent, excellent! Hearken, my boy—But—[*Aside*] no, I can't tell him—I'll surprise him. [*Aloud*] Will she do it? Are you sure she'll do it?

ED. Do it! gad, if I had told her, etc.—See—[*Exit*]

SCENE 3: *In Agony's house. Enter Agony, Margaret and Anne.*

MARG. And so, uncle, we are to content ourselves with single blessedness, till we are thirty, and be mewed up here like pounded cattle, till claimed by the rightful owners, which, as I take it, must be the ones you may choose to favour.

AG. Right, Margaret, right—the ones I may choose to favour. So runs your father's will, though not in these words exactly. He knew what giddy young fools girls are—ready to throw themselves away, fortune and all, upon the first handsome knave that may make love to 'em. And so, to put such folly out of their reach, he very wisely appointed me your guardian, and his niece Anne's there, with an express clause depriving you of a moiety of your estate, in case you should marry any person contrary to my wish. Now there was much wisdom in this will; for though each of your fortunes be a neat little sum, the moiety will not be quite so attractive. Your danger is therefore lessened. And if you should meet anyone to marry you, with a dowry so reduced, why then so much the better; the forfeited portion goes to charitable purposes, and the lord knows, the world is in great want of charity.

MARG. Yes, but to such charitable purposes as you, in your wisdom think proper to apply them. Reads it not so uncle?

AG. Exactly.

MARG. Why then, heaven save us, we shall be leaders of apes after all!

AG. What do you mean?

MARG. Charity begins at home, you know.

AG. Zounds, you insult me! I scorn your insinuations. I *am* charitable, extr'or'nary charitable. I have booked on my diary charities enough to build a church. I have recommended two foundlings to the Alms' House, three orphans to the House of Refuge, and over a dozen rascallions to the Penitentiary. There's charity for you—charity to Society at large—and as for

charity to individuals, why my diary is crowded with it. You are a most impertinent hussy. Anne, my girl, I warrant me, you will not say so peevish a thing of your uncle.

ANNE. Thee is very wise, Uncle Abraham, and knows well what thee is about.

AG. Right, girl. I'll find you a husband yet. I wish to the lord you were married both of you, and you in particular, Margaret, for you are the cursedest plague—

MARG. Am I, uncle? a plague? I thank thee for that word, as the play says. But, dear me! when shall I see a play again?—A plague! Uncle, I am half minded to plague the very life out of you, now you put me in mind of it.

AG. Oho! and why so?

MARG. Simply because I think, if I were to torment you constantly day and night, you would be at last glad to part with me, on any terms. What do you say to it, Anne? Come, I know you have enough of the de—oh, dear! what evil furies run in one's head, when one is discontented!—You have enough mischief in you, if you were but honest enough to show it. Will you plague uncle heartily, maliciously, perpetually, eating and drinking, sleeping and waking, sitting and walking, every way till he dismisses us at once, with free permission to marry the first young fellow that will have us?

AG. Hum, ha! Here's a fury for you!

ANNE. Thee is a merry madcap, cousin Margaret. Our Uncle Peter knows best whom we shall marry.

MARG. But he must let us marry anybody! He won't let any young gentleman come nigh us.

AG. Not I. I tried that once, and what was the consequence? You were on the point of running off, both of you, you jades—

ANNE. Does thee say, I was going to run off, Uncle Peter? Thee is deceived. Thee will know me better by and by.

AG. Why, Zounds! you young heathen, you won't deny that I caught you hearkening to the loving nonsense of young Doubtful with greater interest than you ever bestowed on an exhortation!

MARG. Well, Nan, what do you say to that?

ANNE. I'll not deny but that the young man was a pleasant, and an agreeable and a very comely young man. But thee told me uncle, that thee didn't like him; that he was a poor young man, of no account in the world, and that he loved me only for my wealth. So I believed thee, and thought no more of him.

AG. The deuce you did!

MARG. Anne Coy, I am ashamed of you! What, give up a lover, because your angry uncle didn't happen to like him!

AG. Well, I was angry. But I won't be unjust to the young fellow—I didn't like him, to be sure, and I don't think I ever shall, but that's no reason others should not. As to his poverty, I can't swear to it; I know nothing about it. He dresses like a gentleman and as to his love, I'll do him the justice to say he wears a very long face, and it may be from grief for aught I know. I'll do him justice, though I'll never consent to your having him; no I'll not consent.

ANNE. I don't wish thee should, uncle Peter. I'll wait till thee finds me a husband.

AG. Will you? Zounds! That's a deuce of a—good—girl—You'll wait, you jade! I can't trust you, I can't trust you.

MARG. Well, Anne, you haven't the spirit of a mouse. [*Enter Mrs. Calico*] Ah, my dear Mrs. Calico, I see good news in your face. What's the matter?

MRS. CAL. Why, young lady, there is a box—ha, ha! Who would think it? Well, the world is a world, and the people in it are people. A box, a big box, a great big box! Don't I know something?

AG. Zounds, what do you know? What do you mean by a big box, and all your sly looks?

MRS. CAL. No harm, I'm sure, Mr. Agony. But some people are lucky, and some a'n't. Now I wonder who would send me a big box, full of presents?

AG. Who is it for? Who is it from? You tedious old woman.

MRS. CAL. I can't say, I don't know; I'm a tedious old woman. Well, whose fault is that? People grow old when they live long enough. But they said 'twas for Miss Margaret.

MARG. Yes, 'tis for me! 'tis for me! a box, a big box, a great big box: That's exactly the description of it. Well, uncle, you see I have some lovers even with the fear of the moiety before their eyes.

AG. But Zounds, girl, you don't let them send you presents do you, big boxes full, too?

MARG. Why not, dear uncle? Is there authority against it in the will? Give me the key, Mrs. Calico, you dear old woman.

MRS. CAL. Aha! young lady, wouldn't somebody give something to know something?

MARG. Hush!—

AG. How do I know but what there may be mischief in it?

MARG. Well, haven't I threatened you with mischief already? I give you fair warning.

ANNE. Will thee let me go with thee, cousin, and look over the box?

MARG. No, thou heartless creature. You shall be punished for not joining in the conspiracy; you sha'n't see it till the morning. I'll look at it and then to bed. [*Exit Margaret*]

ANNE. Heigho! this is a wicked world, is it not uncle Peter?

AG. It is, my dear.

ANNE. Nobody sends me a box of presents. Farewell, uncle.

AG. Why, where are you going?

ANNE. To bed. [*Exit Anne*]

AG. Well, good night, my dear. More disappointment for my diary? Zounds, I believe these young jades had sooner live to be old maids, than part with any of their money. The world has come to a fine pass, when avarice becomes a passion of youth as well as of age. But if dull and stupid confinement don't work a little romantic opposition in them, I am confidently mistaken. Well, my good Mrs. Calico, my excellent friend, how is your rheumatism? and your phthisic?

MRS. CAL. Bad, bad, Mr. Agony, I shall never get rid of 'em.

AG. Well now, my dear Mrs. Calico, I have a great respect for you, and intend to ask your advice about some confidential affairs. Who sent that box?

MRS. CAL. Mr.—eh, what, the box? I don't know, Mr. Agony. Ha, ha! How should I know? Some people know more than others, but I don't.

AG. Well, what was in it?

MRS. CAL. I'm clearly in the dark. How should I know, Mr. Agony?

AG. Zounds, you had the key, and are a woman! Hadn't you curiosity enough to open it?

MRS. CAL. Yes indeed, but I had no chance. I left the men carrying it up stairs, and brought the key directly to Miss Margaret, as she had directed me.

AG. Eh? Then she knew it was coming! Come, you have let the secret out, and now you may as well tell all. She knew it was coming?

MRS. CAL. Yes, but I didn't, ha, ha! You think to make me tell, do you? Keep the cat in the bag, and she won't scratch. Oh, I know nothing; ask Miss Margaret. I must go to Miss Anne, if you please. [*Exit*]

AG. Go, you old fool. Well there's a secret in it, that's plain as the nose on my face. If I could finger it as easily as I can finger my nose! Or open it, as I open my snuff box; or snuff it, as I snuff my Maccouba; or blow it, as I blow my olfactory! I must attempt it. Mag is a devilish crafty slut, and may be looking after some means of cozening me and my chief desire is—that she may. [*Exit*]

ACT II.

SCENE 1: *Margaret and Mrs. Calico.*

MARG. You dear soul, have you got the bonnet? Give it to me.

MRS. CAL. Aha! aha! But my little Maggie, what do you want with Anne's bonnet? You wouldn't have occasion for it in the box, would you?

MARG. But it may be useful out of it. Oh, Mrs. Calico, you know uncle is so suspicious of me, and he ain't of Anne. Now if anybody were to see me going to the parson in a Quaker bonnet, they wouldn't know me—or they would take me for Anne, and think no harm of it. 'Tis such a good thing to have a good name. But is cousin Anne abed?

MRS. CAL. I don't know—I'll go see.

MARG. Do—go softly. And mind, when I am fixed, if Uncle Peter should ask questions about the trunk being sent back, tell him I've changed my mind, and refuse to accept it. He'll not be surprised at that.

MRS. CAL. Ha, ha! Well you *are* a girl!—Yes, I'll tell him. I like that: 'Tis a world! [*Exit*]

SCENE 2: *An antechamber. Enter the Porters, with the chest, and Margaret.*

MARG. Here, set it down: that will do. Now, go—you have had your instructions—get away.

FIRST PORT. By gosh, Bill, this here means some fun. But mum: I smell a rat! [*Exeunt Porters*]

MARG. Ugh! what an ugly looking thing 'tis! and I am to suffer myself to be lugged about in it, like a bushel of potatoes, by a pair of lubberly porters! What if the ruffians should let me fall, 'twould break my neck! Or, o dear souls! Suppose the watchman should take 'em up, and carry me to the watch-house! What a figure I should make at the Mayor's office!—Well, but I suppose Charles will see good care taken of me. I'll go—Mrs. Calico!—My uncle must have the moiety, or I be an old maid else. Horrible thought! I'll go. But Anne—my cousin Anne—who would think her so spiritless or so avaricious! How surprised she'll be in the morning! Well, I'll set her a good example. Well, my box, I'll see into you—O lord! o lord! a man!

HA'P. Hum, ha! He-gope! What? How? Where am I? What am I? What's the matter? Heh, heh! Oh, but I'm dreaming, I'm dreaming!—Creature, are you a spirit?

MARG. Oh, heavens, who are you?

HA'P. A man without money—Pennyless, luckless, and Abram Snipe, as the boys call me. Where am I? How did I get here? What's your name? What's the meaning of all this? Heh what, the chest! Ha, ha, ha! I see it now. By the lord, here's a to-do! Madam, I beg you won't be frightened: I'm a gentleman, 'pon my honour, I am—a little out at elbows, but that's a mere casualty—the cloth was rubbed off in this abominable box. I had such a nap in it—but 'twas nothing but nightmare—incubus and succubus. I dreamt I was turned into an ear of corn, and clapped into a patent sheller, and then I went, rolling and rattling and phizzing and spluttering—for all my creditors were turning the winch. The rascals are always shelling me—but they can't do it—I never shelled out in my life. 'Cause how? I couldn't.

MARG. How did you get in this box?

HA'P. A cursed constable with a writ drove me into it. I stopped in to see a friend.

MARG. What friend?

HA'P. Mister, mister—I've forgot his name: Never can recollect names in my life, they are all so deucedly alike, all but the nick-names. Then they came to search the house—I popped into the box—'t'as a spring lock—fell asleep—but how I got here, the deuce take me, if I know. But madam, I think I must have known your father—I know everybody's father—What was his name?

MARG. Agony.

HA'P. Ha, what! Agony? Peter Agony?

MARG. No, sir, Peter Agony is my uncle.

HA'P. Worse and worse! Is this his house? Peter Agony's house. Here's trouble on trouble. First in the frying pan then into the fire, then into the frying pan again. Shall I never do anything but roast? Young lady, you are so deuced handsome, I know you can't be ill-natured. Do let me go—don't call your uncle. 'Twas his doings, the cursed writ and the constable.

MARG. Go, sir, I won't betray you. Was there ever anything so ridiculous? Here's the way—But hist! Stay—here comes someone upstairs. Here, run into this chamber, and be quiet till I send some one to fetch you out.

HA'P. Ah, you are my queen of queens, my spirit of spirits!—Such a night never was! Young, handsome, so I'll trust you. [*Exit*]

MARG. 'Tis the most astonishing thing in the world. I believe the creature is crazy. Oh, Calico, here is the rarest thing happened. [*Enter Mrs. Calico*]

MRS. CAL. Yes, there is the rarest thing happened. Some folks are born to be unlucky. My nose itched this morning, so I thought something would happen. You are ruined, you are ruined!

MARG. Heaven forbid. What's the matter?

MRS. CAL. Why your uncle—

MARG. Well, what of him? Is he broke? Is my fortune gone?

MRS. CAL. Oho, not that neither. Mrs. Calico, said he to me—

MARG. Never mind what he said—What's the matter? Does he suspect? Has he found out?

MRS. CAL. Yes, he suspects, and I think he has found out; and there's an end of the matter.

MARG. What shall I do? what shall I do?

MRS. CAL. Aha! He thought to be worming it out of me. But you don't catch turkeys by gobbling at 'em. But as ever you live, I think he will find you out: and let him alone for such things; yes let him alone. I warrant you in half an hour he knows all about it.

MARG. Half an hour? Then there is not a moment to lose. I'm scared out of my wits. Run down stairs, dear Mrs. Calico, that's a good soul! Bring up the porters—I'll jump in the box. Make 'em carry me right back, and tell 'em to carry gently. Here's the key, directed to Charles—I'll close the spring. You may tell uncle I'm angry, insulted—won't have the presents. Run, run. We'll cozen Uncle Moiety yet. Don't stop to talk. You know I love you, you dear old soul—Run. [*Exit Mrs. Calico*] She is charming, charming! Where's my bundle? Let old uncle have the moiety, if he will; I'll have a husband—Here's the farewell letter to my dear cousin, Anne—She is a goose. Oh, Charles, Charles! if I should smother now! or be found out! How I should be laughed at! Good bye, uncle, good bye, cousin Prude. [*Shuts the box*] Let me out! I forgot the man! Let me out! [*Enter Mrs. Calico and the Porters*]

MRS. CAL. Hush! Ha, ha! Well this is a world!

PORT. Didn't I hear somebody call something?

MRS. CAL. No, you silly fellow. Here's the key, men, and the direction; but I suppose you know that. Now all you have to do, is to walk fast, but not jolt any. Be very tender, don't stumble or shake any.

PORT. Ay, trust us for that. But come, old lady,—we know a thing or two, heh? What's in here, heh?

MRS. CAL. Never do you mind—ask that when you take it to Mr. Eddy-brain—he'll tell you—he'll pay you, and pay you well. Now go, and take great care as you go downstairs. Lord, I don't know which end ought to go foremost!

PORT. Does it make any difference?

MRS. CAL. Does it make any difference, you silly fellow, whether a lady walks on her head or her heels?

PORT. Ha, ha! I don't know. You're a merry old lady. But to make all sure, we'll carry it parallogam. Come, Bob, parallogam now. [*Exeunt*]

MRS. CAL. Yes, carry it parallogam.—I wouldn't have it said, for shame's sake, the dear young lady ever went downstairs head foremost. [*Exit*]

SCENE 3: *Margaret's Chamber, Ha'penny in bed asleep. Enter Anne Coy, with a candle, rope ladder and bundle.*

ANNE. Well, uncle, thee is a wise man indeed, but thee will not make a fool of me neither. I can't tell why thee dislikes young Edward Willow, for to me he seems a most excellent young man. Soft, cousin! is thee asleep? What a pity that with thy mirthful heart, thou art so mercenary as to sacrifice thy lover as thou dost, to thy fortune, and yet to be ever jeering me with what thou callest fickleness! Sleep, sleep soundly.—Thy chamber faces the street, and is the only one will suit my purpose. I wonder where is her box, and her presents? I *should* like to see them before I depart.—Heigho! I must raise the window softly. [*She raises the window, and throws out the cords, and fastens them to the bedpost*] Pass the candle thrice before it, that's the signal to be ready. [*She makes the signal*] If they should not be strong enough! If I should fall and break my leg! And if the doctor should cut it off! Oh mercy! Edward would not have me! Nobody would have me! No, nobody would have me, with a wooden leg! I won't go; and yet if I stay, I must be an old maid! Well, I will go. I wonder how I will look with my gay clothes on!—I'll put my letter on her table. Ah, she will be so astonished when she reads it!—I don't see anyone in the street! Well, I must go—I hope we'll have a pleasant jaunt of it. How sound she sleeps! I could love her better, if she didn't laugh at me, and if she had another spirit. Well, cousin Margaret, I'll give thee a farewell kiss, and wish thee much joy of thy selfishness and thy money.

HA'P. [*Waking*] Money! What! a man without money?

ANNE. [*Dropping the light*] Oh, murder, murder! a man! Old Nick, Old Nick! [*Runs out, screaming*]

HA'P. No, I'm not Old Nick; I'm Peter Ha'penny, a man that has no money. Zounds, what does all this squalling mean? Can't you let a man sleep in peace? I had such an elegant dream.—Lord, lord, I forgot. I'm here—I did but lie down a minute to rest me, till that girl come back. Confound her, she is betraying me, I know by her squalling. Women are jades; they are as bad as duns, they never let a man rest. Ods bobs! What's to be done now? The house is raising—I'll sneak out.

AG. [*Within*] What's the matter? I say I'll lock the trunk up till I have a better account of it. What's the matter here, my girl? [*Enter Agony, with a candle*] What's the matter, I say, niece.

HA'P. Nothing, uncle. Do march off about your business. Have you no more manners than to be coming into a lady's chamber at this time of night, when she's in her dishabille? Fie on you, uncle!

AG. Ha, what! You villain, you Ha'penny! I know you! How did you get here, you rascal? Do you mean to rob me?—Come up here, you porters, come up here! I'll have you, you rogue! I'll sue you for debt, and prosecute you for burglary.

HA'P. Out, you skin-flint, you money-changer, you tithe-gatherer, you sharer of notes, you buyer of bad debts! I'll break your head—I will—

AG. Help! I'll have you—I'll lock you in, and send for a constable. [*Exit*]

HA'P. This beats all. Peter Ha'penny, thou art dished! Locked in! What's to be done—The old fool! I'll bolt him out, and consider about it. [*Bolts the door*] Can I get out the window? Od rat it, I may be in the third story, for all I know! Such a girl, to bring me into this bother—I shouldn't like to break my neck. It might be set badly, and then such a cursed bill as the doctor might make out of it! I'll look out and—[*Stumbles over the ropes*] Ods thunder! What's this? Ropes tied to the bed post, the window open, and—yes, by the lord Harry, a man coming up the wall.—Are the devils all broke loose? This is a pretty girl, 'pon my honour!—If he can get up, I can get down. [*Enter Doubtful, from the window*]

DOUBT. Anne, my soul, where are you? What's the matter?

HA'P. [*Aside*] Ay, what *is* the matter. Hang me if I know!

DOUBT. I say, my dear creature—

HA'P. His dear creature! Well I'll not interfere with him. [*Steals out the window*]

DOUBT. Zounds, this is mysterious! She has thrown the ropes out, yet is not here! I thought I heard a faint scream.

HA'P. [*Aside*] 'Twas enough to wake the dead.

DOUBT. Was that a voice? Curse it, where is she? I'm in a labyrinth here—Anne, I say!—

HA'P. Well, young fellow, you are a rakehell, I see. These women, these women! She betrayed me, and now she's betraying the t'other fellow! Excellent! [*He descends*]

DOUBT. Anne, my dear—Ah, here she comes. Why can't you open the door? Where is it? Anne, my soul. [*The door is burst open. Enter Agony and Porters*]

AG. There's the rascal! Take hold of him, lug him out.

DOUBT. You raggamuffins, what do you mean? Let me go.

AG. Ay, when the constable comes. Pull him out, take him downstairs. [*Exeunt. Reenter Anne*]

ANNE. Everything is quiet. I could almost believe in witchcraft! What's the meaning of it all? A man in my cousin's bed! Who would believe it? Who would think it. What does it mean?—I don't understand it. I should like to stay and find what's the end of it. But, then it will make uncle suspicious, and I may have no other chance.—If there is anything bad in it, some of her friends will write to me about it. Well, there never was a man in my—*[She descends from window]*

SCENE 4: *A parlour in Agony's house. Enter Agony, Doubtful, Mrs. Calico, and the Porters.*

DOUBT. I tell you I'm not your Ha'penny; I know nothing about your Ha'penny. My name's Ned Doubtful, you know well enough.

AG. Run upstairs again Calico—you, fellow, go along with her. Search the house over and over, and find him. *[Exeunt Mrs. Calico and Porter]* So my lad, you've brought your pigs to a fine market, huh? What you're turned housebreaker, are you? Caught in the fact. I thought I read gallows in your face a month ago.

DOUBT. Why, you crabbed old man, do you mean to insult me? Gallows! Come, I don't like such jokes.

AG. Nor do I, confound your impudence!—What, you knavish young fellow, you didn't mean to rob me of anything, eh?

DOUBT. Yes, I did, you curmudgeon: I'll own it; I meant to steal your—

PORT. Hush, hush—damme don't confess—let 'im try you first.

DOUBT. Out, you ass!—I meant to steal your niece Anne.

AG. Zounds, I thought so. 'Twas very unlucky of me to interrupt you, wasn't? Yes, I'll own it was. But you shan't have her. What care I if she loves you or not? Zounds, she shan't have you. Her uncle left me her adviser and judge, and I'll advise and judge her to be locked up, where she shall never more see your ugly face. He recommended her to my care, and I'll take care she's not snap up in a hurry.

DOUBT. Well, heaven be praised.

AG. For what?

DOUBT. That she has so careful, so considerate a guardian. But just consider how cruel 'tis to leave me to die of despair!

AG. Why, die and be hanged. I'll let her go to your funeral.

DOUBT. No, you hardhearted old man, she'll die first. She loves me famously; her heart's in a fine way for breaking. She vowed t'other evening out of the window, it didn't beat so regularly as was common. That's the first

symptom—she is going fast; and by the lord if she does, I'll give evidence to the coroner, and have him bring in a verdict of murder against you.

AG. Ha, ha! She is only flirting with you. I don't mind a little innocent flirtation, but hang being married. She shan't marry and she dislikes you, she told me so with her own mouth.

DOUBT. What will you bet? Come, I don't like the idea of half her fortune going to charitable purposes. So, if you are minded, I'll bet you the safe moiety against the other, that I marry her before a week.

AG. Out, you impudent fellow, are you turned blackleg? But ha, ha! I like your spirit; yes I like it, though somehow or other just now you seem to me to look as you must feel, rather sheepish and down-in-the-mouth. Will, I forgive you. Start, I'm tired of you—you may go—go and write verses, and put 'em the newspapers—I allow her to read the newspapers.

DOUBT. Well, good night. If I a'n't even with you, put me in the press along with my verses and squeeze me into an elegy. [*Enter Mrs. Calico and Porter*]

MRS. CAL. Oh, sir, dear sir!

AG. What's the matter? Can't you find him?

MRS. CAL. No, he's gone, and what's worse, Miss Anne's gone, too.

DOUBT. Bravo! [*Exit*]

AG. Gone? Are you sure? Ha, ha! What Anne gone! Anne Coy, my little Quaker Anne?

MRS. CAL. Ay, sir—It is a world. Here's a letter she left for Miss Margaret, the farewell letter, but Miss Margaret too has gone; here's a letter she left for Anne.

AG. Ha, ha, ha! Moietey's—I mean, misfortunes—never come single. Ha, ha! Why the young jades—gone? Both of 'em, gone?—Hear that, you rascals, both my nieces, are run away!—I'll advertise nobody to trust 'em on my account. You dear old soul, I love—that is—I hate you for the delightful—that is the damnable news. How did the ungrateful husseys get out?

MRS. CAL. Why there's a rope ladder out of Miss Margaret's window.

AG. And she went down that? The simpleton, she might have broke her neck.

MRS. CAL. No, 'twas Anne went down the ladder.

AG. Anne and not Margaret? How do you know?

MRS. CAL. No, I don't know.

AG. Old Calico, you are in the plot, and work as awkwardly in it as a bear would in petticoats. How did she go? Ha! Excellent! Here, you men, go into the kitchen and make them give you something to drink. I think I'll

let you have the chest. [*Exeunt Porters*] You old Jezebel! She's in the trunk there!

MRS. CAL. Well this is a world—what an ideal—

AG. Speak low—A'ant she, I say?

MARG. [*From the chest, faintly*] Let me out!

AG. Silence! Excellent, excellent! What fools! Let you out! No, I'll be hanged if I do. Here, porters, come back, and take your confounded trunk. [*Reenter Porters*] Here, take it and be off—off—double quick time, begone. [*Exeunt Porters with the chest*] Ha, ha, ha! I'll die, Calico, I'll die! The world is full of fools—and these girls are the maddest of 'em all. Well, joy be with 'em, I never was so happy in my life.

MRS. CAL. La, and what for?

AG. What for, you goose? Because they are run off to be married against my will. I hear people growling about the undutiful behaviour of their children; but, gad, when these girls were dutiful I hated 'em and now when they have eloped from me in the most shameful manner, Zounds, I love 'em dearly.

MRS. CAL. Then after all you wanted 'em to be married?

AG. To be sure I did; but 'twouldn't do to tell them so. No, that would never do.

MRS. CAL. Well I'll go tell 'em.

AG. You won't! What do you mean?

MRS. CAL. Why lord love you, 'twill make 'em so happy to hear it.

AG. Come, you're joking.

MRS. CAL. No, I a'n't. I'll go tell 'em, and as you love 'em, so, you'll be glad to hear 'twill save 'em their fortunes, for you know I can swear, you wished 'em to be married.

AG. Why you ungrateful wretch, if you do, I'll lose twenty thousand dollars by it.

MRS. CAL. Well, but I won't.

AG. O you creature, was it for this I've had you my housekeeper these ten years? You won't betray me.

MRS. CAL. O the world, not I—I'll just tell 'em though.

AG. What twenty thousand dollars for charitable purposes to be cozened out of me by such an ugly, abominable, old—stop Calico, excellent Calico, you dear old soul, stop. Calico, I'll give you—

MRS. CAL. I won't be bribed, no not for the world—

AG. I'll give you a pension, I will, Zounds, a handsome comfortable annuity.

MRS. CAL. Now a'n't you a base man?

AG. Calico, hold your tongue, and I'll—no I won't—yes I will—Calico, I'll marry you.

MRS. CAL. Will you, dear soul?

AG. No—I'll be—yes, yes I will. Then, I know for your own sake you'll hold your tongue, on, at least, one subject. Oh lord!

MRS. CAL. Well, Mr. Agony?

AG. What's the matter? What are you grinning at?

MRS. CAL. Well, shall we go to the squire, or send for a parson?

AG. Send for the—Zounds, won't you take the pension?

MRS. CAL. No, you false man; I won't take anything but you. I've served you ten long years, and I deserve to have you. I know how to manage you.

AG. Well, I'll go, I'll go. But how long—Calico how are your rheumatism and your phthisic?

MRS. CAL. Oh, well, my dear old man, never better.

AG. Curse it, you told me you were worse. I had some hopes—but it's no matter. We'll all die sometime! [*Exeunt*]

ACT III.

SCENE I: *In Eddybrain's house. Eddybrain solus.*

ED. Where's the tailor?—When a man is about dressing to be married, how queer he feels!—But, Zounds, how they stay! What you Fiddle, where's the chest? [*Enter Fiddle*]

FID. 'Pon my word, sir, I don't know.

ED. Where's my intended, my life, my soul?

FID. Indeed sir, I hope nothing has happened to her—but I hugely suspect—

ED. Suspect what, you grim villain! Won't she come? Has she changed her mind? Has she jilted me?

FID. I'm afraid 'tis worse than that.

ED. Worse! What can be worse than being jilted? Zounds, I'll immortalize her in a lampoon—Jilt me! Worse than that?

FID. Yes, sir. I suspected the rascals, they asked so many questions, and whispered so much. I'm afraid, sir, oh, I'm afraid—

ED. What?

FID. That the porters have carried her off!

ED. How! what! Carried her off!

FID. Yes, sir, stolen her along with the trunk, thinking it might be very valuable. I waited half an hour at the corner—but all in vain.

ED. Go, run, raise all the constables in town—rattle up the watchmen—raise the aldermen—fee the lawyers—I'll have 'em hanged—I'll—

FID. But in the meanwhile what's to become of the poor lady? They'll break open the chest with a hammer, and maybe they'll knock out her brains.

ED. Oh, horrible! So they may—but I'll skin 'em alive. Run, bounce, hunt 'em out—I'll give half, zounds, all, all I have, if they'll spare her. Come, run—[*Enter Ha'penny*]

HA'P. Howd'i do? What you're a wag?—eh? Ha, ha.

ED. What, you monster, do you laugh? Kick him downstairs, Fiddle—Oh, my beloved soul! My life—my—

HA'P. I say, where are you going? What, after the chest, heh?—

ED. Heh! What do you know of the chest? Have you seen it? Have you found it? Have you brought it? I love you, you tatterdemalion! Where's the chest? Where's my beloved?

HA'P. Hum, ha! Oh, ha, ha, ha! Was it *your* beloved then?

ED. To be sure it was, you comical dog. Where is she, where will I find her?

HA'P. I'll tell you—But first, if you have any loose change about you, lend me a dollar? I'll pay you.

ED. Here, here—find me the delightful creature, and I'll reward you gloriously—

HA'P. Reward me! I scorn to be rewarded! I'm a gentleman. D'ye mean to insult me? I'll borrow, but I won't be rewarded.

ED. You tormenting fellow! Why don't you speak about the lady?

HA'P. Oh, ay, true, the lady!—You're a wag, I see it. But what an unhandsome thing it was to lock a man up in a chest, and send him the lord knows where. Come I don't like such jokes.

ED. Zounds, were you in the chest?

HA'P. Wasn't I? Didn't you know? Come, give me your hand—you're a gentleman; 'twas a mistake, and no trick. But such a time as I've had of it, you've no idea! Carried right to old Agony's stronghold,—mistaken for Old Nick and a housebreaker! Ha, ha! Such a time, such a time!

ED. Then you have seen Miss Agony!

HA'P. Seen her! Ha'n't I? She is the cursedest double-faced—

ED. You knave o' the earth, what do you mean?

HA'P. Mean! Come I'll tell you, I don't like to blab ladies' merits, but 'tis comical—I'll trust your honour.

ED. Yes, trust my honour—You hideous creature, what do you mean.

HA'P. Mean! Come don't be in a passion. But I say, mister, you don't love the girl, heh?

ED. Did one ever see such a tormenting scoundrel! Yes, I love her sir—so go on, or you'll kill me.

HA'P. Take my advice—cut her—cut her acquaintance, and mum.

ED. Explain.

HA'P. She has played you a trick—just such a one as she played me. Oh, I trusted her, I did by the lord, I trusted her and she betrayed me, I swear she did. O women! women!

ED. What, you—

HA'P. Called old sour-kROUT upon me, and then—Ha, ha! now comes the cream of the joke. What do you think? Don't tell anybody—I caught a man in her bedchamber.

ED. Oh, daggers and devils! I shall go into a fit! A man in her chamber!—Are you telling the truth?

HA'P. Do you mean to insult me? My veracity was never questioned, sir, I'll let you know that. How do you think he got there? Mum—a rope ladder! He got up and I got down—there I left him. Wouldn't interfere in a love matter for the world!

ED. Now, if you are speaking the truth, I'm the most mistaken ass in the world. I'll lampoon her—I'll put her in the Tickler; I'll marry somebody else.

HA'P. Do, zounds do, I'll make affidavit to it all—but not before a squire—No, curse me if I go near a squire.

ED. You horrible—

HA'P. Ha, ha! and then to see her sneaking out the window.

ED. Out the window!

HA'P. I saw it, by the lord, and I suppose her gemman followed—but I couldn't stay—I saw a constable sneaking along—that started me—I couldn't see the end of the matter; but may I be dunned to my dying day, if I didn't see her come down the ropes! "*I say my dear creature!*" He said that—Lord, how he sneaked about the room! I thought at first he was come to rob, till he called her *his soul*. Well, heaven save him, if he has no better soul, what's to become of him? What's to become of him?

ED. And what's to become of me? Fiddle, get me a dose of arsenic—rats-bone, you villain! But first, kick this uncomfortable devil out of the house.

HA'P. Kick me out of the house! Kick me! Sir, you are crazy—damnit, you're joking—Sir, I'm a gentleman.

ED. Out, you owl, you rat! You've made me the most miserable creature in all creation—kick him out—I'll hang myself.

ED. You hear—

HA'P. Your master's in a passion, or he's gone mad—He'll beg my pardon, when he's in a better humor, and then I'll forgive him. But for the girl,

ha, ha! who would have thought it?—*I say, my soul, where are you?* Well, well, well—[*Exit*]

ED. Fiddle.

FID. Sir!

ED. Fiddle.

FID. Sir!

ED. Fiddle. Fiddle! This is the cursedest piece of work. Fiddle, do you believe it, Fiddle?

FID. I can hardly say, sir. The man seems to have too little brains for a liar. But have you any suspicion of—of the lover, sir?

ED. Yes, I have, and if I don't swinge him for it—may I—She's a jade, oh, damn her, was there ever such an abominable jade! Fiddle, did you never suspect my friend Ned Doubtful to be a rascal?

FID. Why indeed, sir—

ED. I made him my confidant from the first, because he pretended to have a fancy for Anne Coy! But he was always a dark, sneaking fellow—and then he vowed, he cared not a penny for her! And why? It's plain enough—he was in love with Margaret, and she, the creature! with him! Who else besides him and myself, ever had an opportunity of saying six words to her!—If I don't kill him, may I be hanged; and if I do, I will—So hanging's my destiny.

FID. I think I can tell you something will confirm your suspicions—I had almost forgot it. While I was standing at the corner, Mr. Doubtful, muffled in a cloak passed by me in the direction of Mr. Agony's house. I called him by name, but he wrapped himself closer, and passed without speaking. This looks strange.

ED. 'Tis plain enough. He has been making a stalking horse of me, a cat's paw. But if I don't be even with him, may I never—What's the matter now? [*Enter Porters, with chest, and Ha'penny*] Villains, you've come at last, have you. Go, take that cursed chest, and heave it into the river—I hate the sight of it.

MARG. [*From the chest*] Let me out.

PORT. Oh, the lord, what have we got in here?

MARG. Let me out!

ED. Hah! Isn't that her voice? 'Tis a trick—'tis a trick. Begone, fellows—

PORT. Mr. What-d'y-e-call-it, we've been kept a long time, but I'll tell you the reason.—

ED. Collusion! Begone—give me the key—begone. [*Exeunt Porters. He opens the chest*] Madam, your devoted servant. You look confused, a little confused, madam, 'pon my word you do.

MARG. Ha, ha! I'm safe at last. Oh, Charles I've had the strangest time of it—

ED. Don't doubt it, madam, I don't doubt it—a devil of a time of it. [*Aside*] Why does she come to me? Ned has turned her off, eh? or she's tired of him.

MARG. I can hardly see, or stand straight.

ED. Don't doubt it. Madam 'tis a cursed hard thing to go upright through the world, so you're not singular there; and as for seeing badly, I should like to know how you saw your way here?

MARG. How oddly you talk! Never put me into a box again Charles, unless, heigho! Unless it be the box that is to carry me to the grave. I thought I should have smothered. 'Twas dreadful dark, and when uncle stopped the chest—think of that, Charles! Uncle became suspicious and stopped the chest—I heard him order the men to lay it down—and then I was locked up in a room by myself. How I wished to get out then!—I would have given anything to get out—You don't know what a time I had of it.

ED. Excellent! I know all about it, and a little more even to the gentleman in the room.

MARG. Ha, ha! In my fright, I forgot the poor man. Who was he? But how did you hear about it? I left him locked up. Why did you send me such a fellow? Why did you—

ED. Zounds, I can't bear it any longer! Why you, you,—you woman!—that's the word—do you think I'm a stuck or stone—or are you stick or stone yourself that you can carry it so boldly after what you've done?

MARG. Why Charles, what's the matter? This is strange jesting!

ED. Jestng! Hear that! The impudence of women. To talk of jesting when a man's in the most horrible fury in the world. Jestng!—Come, go home—Zounds, I'm amazed at you!

MARG. Charles, I don't like you to behave so—I don't understand you!

ED. You don't! What, not a—Oh, I'm ashamed of you! Not a man in your chamber?

MARG. I put him there to hide him.

ED. Fire and furies to hide him! She owns it. Come here, you Mister Pennyless.

MARG. Yes, that's the man. How did he get here? I hope you're not angry—there was no harm in hiding him from my uncle—and besides—

HARP. Madam, you're in the dark. I'm not he that called you *his soul*, *his dear creature*. Lord, how she carries it! A'n't you ashamed of yourself, to betray a poor harmless fellow like me, and a poor harmless fellow like him? I say you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

MARG. Charles, this man is crazy.

ED. So am I, so are you, so is everybody. What, you—but I won't call names—you thought to make a fool of me, as you have of yourself!—

MARG. Mr. Eddybrain!

ED. What wouldn't your dear Doubtful be good natured enough to take you?—I'll blow his brains out—

HA'P. *My dear soul, where are you?* Ha, ha! Madam this gentleman's in a passion; he can't talk. I'll tell you what he means. But you had better go home and say nothing more about it. I caught him—mum—by the lord, I caught him.

MARG. Caught who, you ugly man?

HA'P. The gemman that came up the rope ladder. *My dear soul*, said he—Oh, I shall die!

ED. Yes, madam, the gentleman that came up the rope ladder—the gentleman that has the freedom of your bedchamber—the—

MARG. Charles, Charles! Did you bring me here to insult and mock me? I see it all, you savage, you only meant to have me laughed at—But I'll be revenged, I will. A man in my chamber—a rope ladder!

HA'P. I'll swear to it.

MARG. You creature!

ED. Now you can't deny it, and you may go. Fiddle, see the lady home. I'm not to be made a stalking horse.

MARG. And was it for this I allowed myself to be locked up in a box? to be smothered with bad air and darkness? to be knocked about by common porters as if I had been a table or a carpet, or a box of old shoes!

ED. All that can be said, madam, is that you've got out of one box into another. Go, go to your Doubtful. Tell him to marry you and mend your reputation. I'll give him time for that, and then I'll shoot him.

MARG. You're a villain, Charles, to talk so. You know—

ED. I don't; I know no more about a woman than I know about a spinning jenny or the water works. It's all Greek to me. Go! I'll go to France or Turkey—I'll revolutionize or cut off women's heads where one won't be hanged for it.

HA'P. Yes, madam, go—Take his advice. Go to t'other gemman. He's in a passion now—Rope ladders and boxes! Oh, lord—[*Exit*]

MARG. Sir, you'll one day repent this, you will. I am not unprovided with protectors and avengers. I have a brother, sir, and if I don't—[*Crying*] you barbarous man! if I don't make him swinge you for this, I'm no woman. I can't think you are serious in your ridiculous charges—no, you hated me, and got up this ungentlemanly trick, to have me laughed at, yes, to have me

laughed at! Shame on you! I thought of having you killed, but you are not gentleman enough for that—I'll have you whipped, I will. [*Exit*]

ED. I'll go to Otaheite, to Madagascar—no I'll go to a desolate island, where there's no woman but one, and her I'll set up on the shore, as a beacon-post, to warn off mankind. Fiddle!

FID. Sir!

ED. Fiddle!

FID. Sir!

ED. Fiddle, I say, do I look as if I had my ears cut off? Lord, lord, what will this world come to! Fiddle, go buy me a pair of pistols, or blunderbusses, or thirty-two pounders, and ammunition enough for an army! I'll fight him at day-break—What's the matter? [*Enter Tailor*]

FID. The tailor, with your wedding suit.

ED. Curse him unutterably! Tell him to buy me an ass's skin, with the ears hanging to it, and make it into a great coat. I'll wear it o'Sundays—and Mondays too. Everybody will swear it will suit my complexion admirably, yes, fire and furies! admirably! [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 2: *Doubtful's lodgings. Enter Doubtful.*

DOUBT. It is the most extraordinary thing in nature! I believe some one has been making a fool of me after all. No Anne, no Anne! I think she could not have left the house. I looked all round the square. What's the meaning of it all? Zounds, I thought to have cozened 'em all finely, Charles and all! And yet the old woman said Anne had escaped. Perhaps she has made a mistake and gone off with some other instead of me! What a mistake that would be! The poor soul is ignorant of the town and its habits. Well, next time I'll have a confidant. [*Enter Ha'penny*]

HA'P. At open doors the dogs go in. John, my boy, how d'ye do? Do you leave your doors open at midnight? You'll be robbed, or what's worse, you'll be summoned by a cursed constable, with a bill as long as the fire shovel.

DOUBT. Sir, who are you? What do you want? You've made a mistake.

HA'P. You're not my friend John then? You ought to know John; everybody knows John: he has a red nose with a wart on it.

DOUBT. Sir, I say what do you want?

HA'P. Manners, sir, good manners. I'm a gentleman, sir, born and bred. I've had the strangest adventures—I've been locked out of my lodgings, and seeing the door open, I—

DOUBT. Do you think you are in a tavern, sir?

HA'P. I think I'm in the house of a Christian, who'll not refuse shelter to a man in my unlucky condition. Curse it, you look as grum as a contested insolvent. Everybody's grum tonight, lovers and all—Sir, I've had the cursed adventures—I've seen such skylarking and squabbling among the turtles—aha! Mum—mum—been in ladies' chambers, come down rope ladders—saw—

DOUBT. Rope ladders! What do you mean?

HA'P. Sit down and I'll tell you. But sir, I'm a gentleman. I'm just now in a hobble. Land me a dollar; I'll pay you a Monday.

DOUBT. Curse your Monday. What was it you said about rope ladders?

HA'P. Aha! rope ladders! You think there was some robbing in the case. You are wrong—but there was a little deviltry. Do I look, sir, as if I had ever been in a coffin?

DOUBT. A coffin? I don't understand you.

HA'P. Ha, ha! I shall die! I have travelled in stages and steamboats, or horseback and on Shank's mare, but tonight I went a visiting in a furniture box!

DOUBT. Ha! what do you say?

HA'P. In a furniture box, by the lord! Then I found myself napping in a lady's chamber. But such a lady! Sir, I hope you don't love a lady! They'll betray you most unconscionably. Do you know that old cormorant of the earth, Peter Agony?

DOUBT. Agony!

HA'P. I hope he'll go to heaven, but I doubt it. He has a niece—but mum—I found a man in her room.

DOUBT. The devil you did!

HA'P. He shinned up a rope ladder, but how the rope ladder got there, I don't know. *Where are you, my angel, my life, my soul?* said he. I swear, I was shocked and scandalized at him.

DOUBT. Then your name is Ha'penny? heh?

HA'P. Right, Peter Ha'penny commonly called Peter Pennyless, and by the little boys—Abram Snipe. How did you know? Did I know your father? Did you know mine?—

DOUBT. Curse your father! If you know anything about that lady, you will make me a happy man by telling me.

HA'P. Ha, ha! what are you, the lover? The rope ladder boy.

DOUBT. Yes, I'm the lover; but where's my mistress, my—

HA'P. Ha, ha! I shall die! She's coming. She's coming; she's just left one, and now, I reckon, she'll be after the other.

DOUBT. What do you mean, you grinning jackanapes?

HA'P. You're a greenhorn, my lad. Live in the world, as long as I have. Say your prayers, and avoid woman. Didn't t'other lover say they were harder to understand than a spinning jenny? And so they are. Don't be angry; you are most cursedly cozened.

DOUBT. How! Cozened!

HA'P. Most abominably; so has the other gemman. What's-his-name. I never saw anything like it. So you go into ladies' chambers do you? You ought to be ashamed of yourself! Ha, ha! Quaker ladies, too! Reprobate Quakers!

DOUBT. You ugliest thing that ever I saw, are you talking about my Anne?

HA'P. Anne! Is that her name? Ay, and t'other man's Anne. He has been making a fool of you—By the lord, the other gemman has just found her out, and such a rating as he gave her! He swore he wouldn't be her stalking horse, so, I suppose, you will! Ha, ha! Such a hypocrite as she is! She wanted to deny all about you, but I was ready to swear to it.

DOUBT. My friend, are you sure of all this?

HA'P. I'll swear to it.

DOUBT. Can you help me to a rope, or to any reasonable means of getting out of this ridiculous world?—That I should be fooled by two such simpletons as Anne and Charles Eddybrain!

HA'P. Eddybrain! Is that his name?

DOUBT. By such an ass, with all my suspicions before me! Curse his lying confidence; 'twas that lulled me into security. My friend Ha'penny, you are a very agreeable man—you may go.

HA'P. Go! What d'you mean?

DOUBT. That if you don't take yourself off instantly, I'll not leave a sound bone in your skin. You messenger of bad news, begone.

HA'P. Ingratitude is the worst of vices. I'm a gentleman, sir.

DOUBT. Out of the house, or I'll give you to the watch as a housebreaker.

HA'P. You are worse than a savage. I'll have gentlemanly satisfaction. Aha! Who's here, muffled up so tidily? Mum—I'll go—I've seen billing and cooing enough. I'll go see t'other gemman, Mr. Eddybrain. I can't sleep in the street. [*Exit Ha'penny, and enter Anne Coy*]

ANNE. Who is that strange creature? Thee is a pretty man, friend Edward!

DOUBT. Ay, in my Sunday clothes. His effrontery is astonishing.

ANNE. To leave me to find my way to thee. What did thee mean? Why didn't thee wait at the window? I was nigh to be lost in the streets. Was thee scared away? I believe my uncle was alarmed, there were such doings in the house.

DOUBT. Such doings indeed! Well how did you leave t'other gemman? I hope you didn't quarrel beyond reconciliation.

ANNE. Quarrel! What does thee mean?—Ha, ha! they will turn me out of meeting!—Well, Edward, what did thee say? Was thee talking about the squire? 'Tis so odd to be married by a squire! I shall be ashamed to look him in the face.

DOUBT. And yet you can look in mine! O you astonishing creature! You've just arrived five minutes too late. Five minutes ago, and you might have made me as great a fool as you pleased, but now I know all about it. 'Twon't do, madam, 'twon't do.

ANNE. Thee frights me. What is thee talking about?

DOUBT. About your amazing hypocrisy. I agree with you, 'tis a good thing to have two strings to your bow, or two beaus to your string. But 'twon't always do. I have half suspected you all along, but I confess I considered Eddybrain a greater fool than he seems; forgetting, like an ass, that the greater the fool the more irresistible the lover.

ANNE. Friend Doubtful, thee is crazy.

DOUBT. No, I've come to my senses. Eddybrain don't love you, so you'll say—so he said—but he was humming. I'll shoot him, I believe.

ANNE. And does thee suspect me with him—with my cousin's beau? and after all the trouble and danger I've run to to come to thee?

DOUBT. Your cousin has a catspaw, 'twasn't I. You see, I know it all, I have just seen the man who was present at your interview with Eddybrain.

ANNE. Interview with Eddybrain!

DOUBT. Zounds, do you think I'll put up with what Eddybrain has cast off?

ANNE. I tell thee, thee is crazy; or some wicked fellow has been poisoning thy jealous temper with the most ridiculous of all stories.

DOUBT. So it is the most ridiculous of all stories. I'll have it in the newspapers with our names in full. Oh, you deceitful creature! The man offers to swear to it, and he has no interest in lying.

ANNE. You abominable fellow, you are—

DOUBT. *Thee is*. Speak Quaker grammar.

ANNE. I won't; I renounce the Quaker, for I'll be revenged. You are a monster. You asked me to marry you—I won't.

DOUBT. Right; I like your spirit. Come, let's go.

ANNE. To the squire's?

DOUBT. No; home—to your uncle's.

ANNE. O you barbarous man! I'll never forgive you.

DOUBT. Come, I'll be civil; I'll see you home.

ANNE. Oh! oh!

DOUBT. 'Tis the easiest thing to cry in the world.

ANNE. You monster! I won't have your arm; I won't touch you.

DOUBT. Right. I'll follow at your heels, but as to being led by the nose, I forswear it. You—but—will you go, madam? There'll be some heads broke on the strength of this—I'll walk behind you, and if the dogs bark, or the people point at us, don't mind 'em—we must expect it, we have deserved it. [*Exeunt*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I: *Agony and Mrs. Calico.*

MRS. CAL. You dear old man.

AG. Ha, ha! Don't, don't talk about that. My nieces are married against my wishes, and so am I. But don't put me in mind, don't, Calico, don't.

MRS. CAL. Call me Mrs. Agony now. I'm no longer Calico.

AG. No more you are: I've bought you to hold your tongue; signed, sealed and delivered before an alderman; so there's no joke in it. But what's the gain? Twenty thousand dollars for charitable purposes. Come, you're not so ugly as I thought you were.

MRS. CAL. Ah, the world! Men grow old, but they don't forget how to flatter.

AG. Good! But charitable twenty thousand! Ha, ha! No, I swear you are good enough looking for a—Ha! What's the matter now? [*Enter Margaret*] Ha, ha! you young jade, you've come back to ask my blessing, heh? You shan't have it. You eloped—you married against my wishes. Ha, ha! I'll never forgive you—you married against my wishes.

MARG. Married, uncle!—Now how everybody will laugh at me!

AG. What, Margaret a'n't you married? I say, a'n't you married? But where's your husband?

MARG. Married, uncle! Husband, uncle! You are merry tonight.

AG. Now by the lord, a'n't you married, I say?

MARG. N—n—o.

AG. Then I am the most ridiculous old fool! You did this to trick me, you young jade!—Calico, you are as ugly as Beelzebub. You did it to trick me too! Yes, you old beldame. I'm the most unfortunate man. Didn't you run off to be married? Didn't you plot and juggle to be married? Didn't you cozen your loving uncle, steal his keys, break open his doors, throw dust in his eyes, force him to be—Oh, furies!—Didn't you do all this to be married!

MARG. Yes, I did, but still I a'n't married. So you need not take on so, uncle,

I'm not married, no I'm not married; and if you'll only be a good uncle, and take your walking stick and go give my—[*Crying*] my Charles a good sound beating, I'll promise, yes, I'll promise never to marry without letting you know all about it.

AG. You ha'n't quarreled with him?

MARG. Yes, I have; I'll never forgive him. He asked me to elope, only to hoax me and laugh at me, and then told me to go home, for he wouldn't have me, no, he wouldn't have me.

AG. Calico, I'll have you skinned; I'll prosecute you for conspiracy!—I'm ruined. He won't have her. Maybe t'other won't have Anne. You foolish young creature, a'n't you ashamed of yourself? to let all your relations get married and you come back a maid! Where's Anne? You goose, she's married!

MARG. Is cousin Anne married? How did she get married? Oh, dear! I'll never be married. Everybody gets married but me.

AG. Yes, everybody gets married but you. Anne is married, and, and—so am I! There you have it. I'm married, too.

MRS. CAL. Yes, my dear young lady—that is, my dear niece; this is a world.

MARG. Ha, ha, ha! You a'n't! What married and to dear old Goodbody, uncle? Oh, it is the funniest thing.

AG. Funny! You baggage, do you laugh at me.

MARG. Excellent! Dear Calico, dear aunt, I mean, you'll not lock me up?—You'll find me a husband and make uncle Peter consent to it, won't you?

AG. Consent to it? Who'll have you now, you reprobate? Well, well, sorrow don't last for ever; care killed a cat—here's t'other—she's married, I can swear by the look of her. [*Enter Anne*] Anne, you heathen, where's your husband?

MARG. Yes Anne, where is your husband?

AG. Ha, ha!—Moiety, moiety!—How sheepish she looks! That's the way with new married people; they look as if they were laughed at. Anne, you sinner, you disobedient artful hussey, where's your husband, that you married contrary to my wishes?

ANNE. Thee is joking, uncle.

MARG. Why Anne!—

MRS. CAL. Why niece!—

AG. Why, Jezebel! A'n't you married neither?

MARG. Cousin Nan, you're not married, 'tis plain! Ha, ha—I'm so delighted.

AG. Speak Anne, have pity on your loving old uncle; are you married or not?

ANNE. Are you all laughing at me? Am I the first person that was ever trifled with? Don't laugh at me, uncle.

AG. Laugh, you ridiculous girl! I can't laugh! O you diabolical old woman!

ANNE. Don't laugh at me, cousin; I can't bear it, 'twasn't my fault.

MARG. No I won't laugh at you—ha, ha, ha! Did you get into a box too? Ha, ha, ha! I wouldn't laugh at you for the world, Cousin Anne—ha, ha, ha! not for the world! ha, ha!

ANNE. Thee is a cruel girl. I couldn't help it, if Edward was a false-hearted, and foul-tongued man.

MARG. False and foul! Oh, excellent! Come to my arms, you unlucky creature. I love you astonishingly. But what did he say? 'Twas Doubtful, wasn't it?

ANNE. He treated me like a savage—I'll be revenged.

MARG. Will you, you reprobate? Oh, I love you. I'll help you. We'll both be revenged. But dry your tears and look round at uncle and at aunt. The young creatures are married!

ANNE. Ha, ha! Well, this is delightful.

AG. It isn't delightful; it is damnable. I'll protest against it.—I'll be divorced. I was taken in, I was cheated.

MRS. CAL. You cruel man, how you talk. 'Twas n't my fault if—

AG. Hush, hush, or you'll make all worse.

MRS. CAL. I won't be treated so—I won't be called such names.

MARG. Right, aunt, don't be called names. Scold him, scold him. I love scolding.

MRS. CAL. I'd have you know I'm your wife, Mr. Agony, your lawful wife before the squire.

ANNE. That's right, aunt; thee will wear the breeches, I see it by uncle's being so sheepish. Was I sheepish, uncle? Thee is a very wise man; but thee is married.

AG. And this is what the moieties come to? Well, I daren't scold her, till they're married, and the old witch knows it. Come, go to your beds, you fools—I'll lock you up.

MARG. Yes, do—'tis better to be locked up than married and scolded.

AG. Then hang me, if I'll please you so much. You're in no danger now; you are both dismissed by your lovers; and just to show you how insignificant and unamiable you are, I'll throw my doors wide open. You may go out and in when you please; anybody may do the same, all the beaus in town; I know none of 'em will have you now.

MARG. Well, uncle, matrimony makes you bitter; and want of it makes us the same. Come, Anne, we had better be confidants. But I'm glad you're not married. Good night, dear uncle, and dear aunt. [*Exeunt Margaret and Anne*]

MRS. CAL. My dear old man—

AG. You old—! [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 2: *Eddybrain's house. Eddybrain and Fiddle. Eddybrain writing.*

FID. But sir, I don't think the matter is worth fighting about.

ED. Hold your tongue.

FID. Just consider, sir, a bullet through one's head—

ED. You rascal, don't you know my heart's broke, and the sooner my head's broke too, the quicker my body will be of a piece. Listen; I can't get bitter enough—Listen. *Mr. Edward Doubtful: Sir, you are the greatest double-faced scoundrel in Philadelphia.*—I like that *double-faced*, though I'm dubious whether it wouldn't be better to say, *faceless*, the *greatest faceless scoundrel* in town.—Fiddle, what button does the heart lie under?

FID. That depends upon the tailor.

ED. On the tailor! Does the tailor make our insides?

FID. No, sir, but he has the hiding of 'em.

ED. I swear I was monstrously in love with her. I wonder if Ned will marry her? Well, well, well, well! The world is full of women, and devilish good ones too: so what's the use of grieving? Fiddle, do I look very melancholy?

FID. No, sir—

ED. I wonder now what he was doing in her chamber? Oh I'll kill him, I'll kill him! I pitied him, I laughed at him, for his ridiculous rivalry; and he all the time was doing the same by me! But what a prodigious coquette she was! Most prodigious! Heigho! She had a most divine mouth, and the best natured eye—damn it, it was too good natured. Oh, lord!—Fiddle, bring me some more paper; I'll make my will.

FID. Oh, lord sir, your will!

ED. Yes; I'm not going to fight with cork bullets or fresh salt; I'll have a Bunker's-Hill of it; and as I reckon we'll be both killed, I may as well make my will as not. So, imprimis—

FID. But sir, you have no relations to leave your property to.

ED. That's true; but I'll effect some great desideratum with it. Imprimis, I leave, in trust of the proper authorities, ten thousand dollars to treat the militia on review days. 'Tis a shame they should be left to get drunk at their

own expense. Item, ten thousand dollars, in trust as aforesaid, to furnish dinners to the families of said militia on the days as aforesaid. 'Tisn't right they should be neglected, when the heads of 'em are so faithfully serving the State. Item, five thousand dollars to furnish our coal carriers with Chinese gongs; and five thousand to furnish all vagabond serenaders with bagpipes: There is a decided taste for music showing itself in the generation; and it is right to encourage it. Item, five thousand to the first steamboat that shall burst a boiler after the date hereof. Item, two cents to constitute a fund for rewarding patriotic politicians; and the residue to furnish gingerbread to all disappointed office-seekers. I leave two lawyers to be my executors and I leave them nothing else; they will help themselves. There's a will for you! If dad had left me a little more, I should have converted a few savages or so; but as it is, I'll do all the good I can. Hey day! What's the matter? [*Enter Doubtful*]

FID. [*Aside*] Now, they'll have it. [*Aloud*] Pray, sir, don't quarrel. I'll go get help, and have 'im bound over. [*Exit*]

ED. Astonishing! Has he the impudence? He's come to laugh at me!

DOUBT. Now if he can have the conscience to grin at me, I'll—

ED. Hum! Doubtful, how d'e do? Do you know you look—

DOUBT. Like an ass, you mean. But don't say it. And do you know you look—

ED. Like a ninny, you were going to say; but don't say it. Damn it, sir, do you come here to laugh at me?

DOUBT. And, sir, do you mean to laugh at me?

ED. Laugh!

DOUBT. Laugh! Sir, I abominate hypocrisy. You may think everything is fair in love—

ED. If I do, may I be hanged. No, I think being cozened by your friend and mistress together, is the cursedest thing in nature.

DOUBT. You think so! And why did you act so unfairly with me?

ED. I unfairly! Didn't I make you my confidant, and didn't you betray me?

DOUBT. Amazing effrontery! To charge me with your own crime.

ED. Sir, this is too bad, by the lord it is! You cheat me out of my mistress, and instead of laughing at me, as you ought—Damn it, sir, why don't you laugh?—You talk as if I was the sinner! Dammee, sir, how dare you rob me of my adorable Margaret!

DOUBT. Ha, ha! Your impudence is the most remarkable thing possible! But, sir, you'll not get off so easily: You shall marry Anne this night, or—

ED. Oons, you unconscionable fellow, do you expect to rob me of one girl, and then force me to marry another! Sir, you have ruined Margaret's character utterly, and if you ha'n't married her yet, you shall, yes, sir, you shall.

DOUBT. Ha, ha! Just to bear you company. Did ever one see such an in-supportable double-faced!—

ED. Faceless!—

DOUBT. Insolent!—

ED. Impudent!—

DOUBT. What do you mean? Gentlemen can quarrel, sir, without resorting to that weapon of the vulgar, abusive language, damn your impudence, they can; so don't be abusive.

ED. Do you deny you haven't decoyed away my Margaret?

DOUBT. Do you pretend you haven't stolen my Anne?

ED. I'll prove it.

ED. Zounds, sir, you shall fight. Fiddle, where's my pistols?

DOUBT. Here, you villain, you take the shovel, I'll take the tongs.

ED. No, sir, I'll take the poker; and if I don't poke this deceitful devil out of you—[*Enter Ha'penny*]

HA'P. What's the matter? Whose cow's dead? Don't fight, the constable's close at hand, and by the lord, he'll nab you. Consider if the girl's no better than she should be—

ED. Here, you Mephistopheles—

DOUBT. You wandering Jew—

ED. Isn't this the man?

DOUBT. Isn't this the fellow?

HA'P. Ha, ha! Ha'n't you got more sense than to be quarreling about a woman, that has been making a fool of you both? You are even there. You've been making fools of one another; and you're even there.

ED. You vagabond, are you grinning at me?

DOUBT. You evil messenger, are you laughing at me?

HA'P. Come lend us a dollar between you, and we'll adjourn to a tavern and make it up.

ED. Fiddle! bring me some porters!—You confounded fellow, do you think you are to laugh and be merry, while I'm such a miserable dog? Jump into that box.

DOUBT. While I'm such an unhappy hound? Jump into that box. We'll drown you.

HA'P. Ha, ha, ha!—

ED. Unite against our common foe—we'll quarrel afterwards. [*They lay hold of him*]

HA'P. Ha, ha, ha!—Why gemmen, gemmen! You are joking. You won't murder me?

ED. No, but we'll put you out of the way for awhile. Won't you get in? Here, constable—

HA'P. I protest, by the lord, this is felony, without benefit of clergy. [*Enter Fiddle and Porters*]

FID. Part 'em, part 'em.

FIRST PORT. Why, ods bobs, do you call that a fight?

HA'P. Why gemmen, gemmen, this'll never do!

ED. Be quiet, [*They force him into the chest*] or I'll give you up to the constable; hold your tongue, he's at the door. Here fellows, you know the house you carried this box to an hour ago; carry it there again, and tell Mr. Agony 'tis a present for him!

PORT. Aha! With a man in it?

ED. Now, sir, I'm at your services. I'm not to be fooled.

PORT. That's right; snub it out. Make a ring here for the gemmen. I loves fair play. We'll be your bottle holders and backers—and this t'other fellow, shall keep 'count.

ED. You rascal!

DOUBT. Come 'tis a good reproof. If we quarrel like blackguards, why shouldn't we have blackguards to back us? Be ready; get your friend; I'll be back in thirty minutes, and we'll quarrel genteelly. [*Exit*]

ED. Right. Begone; and [*Loudly*] if the man makes any noise give him up to the first watchman you meet. [*Exeunt Porters, with chest*] Zounds, nobody shall laugh or be happy, as long as I'm not. No I'll make the world unhappy. I'll set 'em all by the ears; I'll persuade 'em to turn nullifiers. [*Exit*]

SCENE 3: *Chamber in Agony's house. Margaret and Anne.*

MARG. Oh, it is plain enough. It wouldn't have happened if we had done as any other two girls in the world would have done—made confidants of each other. But to say the truth, Anne, I thought you were such a modest sanctified creature.

ANNE. Oh, dear!

MARG. Yes, indeed a prude. And you know nobody will trust a prude. Why should we trust them, whose whole conduct shows they are unable to trust themselves. But that our charmers should be such egregious ninneys, such ridiculous fellows! Ha, ha! and Mr. Doubtful suspected you all along? What a man! Now I should like to know which of 'em is really the greater fool! I wonder if they would fight, if we'd let 'em alone?

ANNE. I hope so, faith—

MARG. You sinner!

ANNE. Well cousin, if you think there's no hopes of being married, I'll stick to the Quaker; but otherwise I may as well practice a little before I am excommunicated.

MARG. Oh, you are a jewel. But will you have spirit enough for the plot? Recollect if you put on the breeches, *that* will be very good practice before marrying.

ANNE. Ah, I'm afraid I haven't courage for that, and to tell you the truth, I don't much care who wears 'em, so I can only get before the parson and on the road to Niagara.

MARG. Well that's honest, and I believe I'll spare you the trial. But, but—you mustn't be shocked, if I swear a little.

ANNE. Swear! What is thee talking about?

MARG. Come, don't be scared. A man can't go along now a days without swearing; 'tis so big and masculine. One's effeminate without it. And it is so enviable to be able to swear like a gentleman, as "*How d'e do, Dick, Damn it? Tol'lol Bob, dammee.*" Oh, I'll swear very genteelly. But I say, my dear, can you stand fire?

ANNE. Why you don't mean to go so far?

MARG. I'll go the whole hog, da—. No, I can't say it well in petticoats. But I'll teach 'em a thing or two, I'll give 'em the time of day, my flower.

ANNE. The time of night you mean.

MARG. To be sure; do you think my impudence would carry me into daylight as well as trousers?

ANNE. But suppose we can't get out?

MARG. Never fear. It's an ill wind, you know; and our ridiculous return with the confession of our quarrels, has thrown uncle off his guard. How he tried to mortify us! But we'll be even with him. Well, let's go and prepare.

ANNE. [*Looking from the window*] Won't it be too late? Stay—what's all this?

MARG. 'Pon my word; 'tis the chest again! What's in the wind now? Stay here, till I have it brought up. Uncle mustn't see it. [*Exit*]

ANNE. She is a wild soul; but who isn't wild at the thoughts of a husband and a trip to Niagara? [*Reenter Margaret with the Porters and chest*]

MARG. Softly, softly. There that will do; set it down. What's in it?

PORT. A present for Mr. Agony.

MARG. Well, he shall have it. Here's a dollar for you. Get away.

PORT. But I say, marm, you mought be scared.

MARG. Go, go. [*Exeunt Porters*] Well there's more mischief brewing. There's somebody here; I hear 'em breathing hard. Who's here? Who's in the box? No answer. It's a rat running about. Get me a kettle of hot water; I'll scald it.

HA'P. [*From the box*] No, don't, let me out. I'm no rat, but I'm as poor as a rat.

MARG. Ha, ha! [*Opens it*] What are you doing here now? Napping again, sir?

HA'P. Well, I'm like Sampson: Delilah will give me up to the Philistines.

MARG. You wretch, do you call me Delilah?

HA'P. Well a'n't you? a'n't you the betrayer of your beaus, as Delilah was?—Eh, what! Who's that? Is there two of you?

MARG. Two of us! Don't you see?

HA'P. Oh, lord! Oh, lord! Was there ever such a blunder! Two of you! Did you go down a rope ladder?

ANNE. No, 'twas I.

HA'P. Oh, the deuce! Did Mr. Eddybrain turn you out of his house?

MARG. No, 'twas I.

HA'P. Oh, it is clear enough. And I suppose I'll be hanged for their murder.

MARG. Oh, dear! they ha'n't been fighting?

HA'P. Not yet, but they will be.

MARG. Not before daylight?

HA'P. Yes, in a quarter of an hour.

MARG. Oh, murder! And you, you wretched creature, 'twas you that brought 'em to it, wasn't it?

HA'P. Yes, 'twas me, but by the lord, I didn't mean it. I only told 'em what I saw, this cursed night, and confound the ungrateful fellows. But there it is! Ingratitude is its own punisher. I'm the only man now could put 'em right; but they crammed me into a box, and sent me to my creditor. So they'll have to fight and blow one another's brains out, and no help for it. Without you, you sweet dear handsome souls—if you'd only let me out.

ANNE. Yes, we'll—

MARG. No, we won't. You'll only fall into some new blunders and make matters worse.

HA'P. I'll never blunder again—how could I help it?

MARG. Here get into this room and be quiet as a mouse. You shall be safe—and must be forthcoming only when you are called for.

HA'P. But they'll kill one another.

MARG. Shall I call Mr. Agony?

HA'P. Oh, lord, no. I'll go now. But don't, don't tell him, don't betray me. He'll make me take the benefit. [*Exit*]

MARG. [*Locking the door*] Remember—don't go to bed again. Ha, ha! He would have spoiled our sport. Come don't look wild, Anne. I'll be even with you. He may nap on your bed now. We've no time to lose. We must prepare, and prepare for a trip to Niagara! [*Exeunt*]

ACT V.

SCENE I: *Agony's study. Agony solus.*

AG. There is vast satisfaction in chuckling over our joys, and grumbling over our sorrows; but it isn't always safe to chuckle and grumble aloud; for, as there is more opposition than sympathy in the world, the world is deucedly disposed to laugh at us for our griefs and persecute us for our joys. How the world would laugh at me, if I were such a fool as to make a confidant of it! Nothing but crosses and calamities! Well, there is some use in recording evils, were it only to have the satisfaction to read 'em afterwards an hundred times, and be an hundred times assured they are over! Mem. [*Writes*] *My nieces are unlucky jades. Tonight they eloped, stayed long enough to make me hope they were married, and that I had at last arrived at the summit of my wishes: when, to my astonishment and horror, they returned unmarried.—* Mem. *Their lovers sent 'em back.—*"Twas the cursed moiety scared 'em. There is no charity in these young dogs! There's a pleasure in confessing one's sins almost as great as in committing 'em; and if it were not for fear of consequences, men would be eternally damning themselves. A diary has all the pleasure without the peril, provided we let nobody read it. Men's ears are treacherous things to write our stories on; we may cut 'em off, but the record is still there; but on paper, destroy the leaf and the history is nullified. Mem. *Married tonight my old housekeeper. She's a cunning old devil.* Mem. *An example of the danger of writing on ears; for while I was tickling her ears, she was nabbing me by the nose.* Well-a-day, well-a-day! There's some economy in it. She cost me just—Zoons, you old jade, what do you want? [*Enter Mrs. Calico*]

MRS. CAL. Aha! the world is a world! Good news for you, my dear old man.

AG. Well what's the matter?

MRS. CAL. Our nieces are going to run away again.

AG. You don't say so! Zounds if you are tricking me now!

MRS. CAL. Didn't I see? Ha, ha! What do you think? The big box is back again.

AG. Curse the big box! She won't be fool enough to hide in that again.

MRS. CAL. I saw it in the antechamber. Thinks I, here's a to-do! So I goes to Margaret's chamber door, where I heard a talking; I looked through the key-hole, and what do you think I saw?

AG. You saw a couple of young reprobates saying their prayers, didn't you?

MRS. CAL. Aha, not so bad as that—not so good, I mean. No 'twas better—this is, worse—Oh, the lord! No 'twasn't worse neither!

AG. Why, you goose, you are in a mist.

MRS. CAL. Yes I am; I mean 'twas something better for us than praying; though what can be better than praying?

AG. You tedious creature!

MRS. CAL. Well, you may call me names now, for you've a right to it, being my lawful husband. But oh the world! I saw Margaret dressing herself in an old suit of her brother's clothes.

AG. You didn't!

MRS. CAL. Didn't I? Ah, she has a foot! Well, when I was young—but it's no matter, I'll never be young again.

AG. Excellent! There's comfort in it. In her brother's clothes! What, with Uncle Sam's buttons? But maybe 'tis only for pastime, eh?

MRS. CAL. I don't know what it's for, but it's true. And our little Anne, the mad creature! she is dressing in a gay wedding gown!

AG. Victoria! The jades put on long faces to deceive me. Ha, ha! They shall deceive me; I love to be deceived, and I will be deceived. But don't *you* deceive me.

MRS. CAL. Ha, ha! I thought they wouldn't rest; they're no chickens. How they laughed and tickled one another! How Anne blushed, when she looked at herself in the glass! How Margaret scolded and kicked, when she got her foot in the wrong leg of the trousers!

AG. They are going to be married! it's as clear as sunshine. Ha, ha! How I love the shameless business! Run downstairs, Calico, drive away the servants—and let 'em have a clear path. I'll kill anybody that stops 'em. Then keep a sneaking watch on 'em. I wouldn't be deceived this time for that is I would be deceived most famously! [*Exit Calico*] I don't understand a bit of their capers, but let 'em caper. Mem. Ha, ha, ha! I'll follow 'em, and when they are married, lord! how I'll hug the hussies.—I mean how I'll reprimand 'em, and show 'em my wrath and indignation! Mem. *My beloved nieces are just going to run away.* Aha! 'Tis the finest thing to run away in defiance of

our friend's wishes, our friends are sometimes so deuced glad of it.—Mem.—*I'll buy that new house in Chestnut Street.* Oh, ay—charity is an excellent thing, and I'll be charitable. [*Ha'penny thrusts in his head from behind and withdraws it instantly*] Heh, what! Calico is that you?—What makes her stay? [*Rises and comes forward*] That house in Chestnut St.! Buy a few more mortgages. Yes, I'll be charitable; I'll lend every penny of it—on good security; and lending is serving the needful, and serving the needful, is charity! [*Enter Calico*] What's the matter? What has scared you? Won't they go?

MRS. CAL. Oh, the lord! I'm so afeard—

AG. Won't they go, I say?

MRS. CAL. I think they're gone, but—

AG. Bravo! bravissimo! If they have but decamped—Where's the box?

MRS. CAL. That's left behind, empty and open; and so is Margaret's chamber.

AG. Aha! I'm the happiest old fellow.

MRS. CAL. I went to Anne's; it was locked, with the key on the outside. I opened it softly, and oh the lord! What do you think I saw?

AG. A cat and her kittens—a rat racing a cockroach—anything, ha, ha!

MRS. CAL. No, I saw a man—an ugly, tattered fellow, who clapped the door to in my face.

AG. By the royal George, it's Ha'penny again! He's mad—I'll catch him. But softly; maybe they're not got out yet; and I wouldn't stop 'em for the world. [*Exeunt Agony and Calico. Enter Ha'penny*]

HA'P. Yes it's Ha'penny. You old nabificator! More betraying! Next time I trust a handsome woman, I'll give her leave to betray me. None but the ugly are true and faithful. Well, 'twas lucky there were two ways of getting out of *that* chamber: but how am I to get out of this? [*Reads from the Diary*] Mem.—*Married my housekeeper—summit of wishes—nieces just going to run away. Peter Agony's Diary of occurrences and thoughts.*—Here's damnable rascality!—Ha, ha! If I can only get out now with this precious journal! I'll try it, while they're looking after me. And, namesake Peter, I'll not steal it; I'll just borrow it, and you shall have it again on Monday. [*Exit*]

SCENE 2: *Eddybrain's house. Eddybrain and Fiddle.*

ED. Well what did he say?

FID. He said duelling was getting out of fashion, and he be cursed if he'd do anything that wasn't fashionable.

ED. There's a friend! Well you went to Tom Dagger?

FID. He vowed he was bound over to keep the peace, for being challenged a month ago by Mr. Firebrain; otherwise he'd be at your service.

ED. Humph! But Sam Restless—he'll go, won't he?

FID. He says he is courting a serious widow, and has some thoughts of joining the Church; otherwise—

ED. The devil take his *otherwise!* Well, but Dick Brag—What said he?

FID. He said he never meddled in anybody's quarrels but his own. Mr. Roamabout said he had business in every state in the Union, and so it wouldn't be safe for him to meddle.

ED. Well, but Nat Fray? He's always fighting.

FID. He said, seconds got all the blame: He'd fight for any man he liked, but he'd see him hanged before he go his second.

ED. There's the deuce of it! But the forlorn hope, good natured Bob?

FID. He was drunk, and eating pickles.

ED. Humph. But what's to be done? We must fight, you know.

MARG. [*Within*] Come along, you foolish wench. Bring me along side this deceitful craft, and if I don't blow him out of water, sky-high, blow me, that's all. [*Enter Margaret as a Midshipman, with Anne in a bridal habit*]

FID. Sir, you've made a mistake.

MARG. Port, hard port, you lubber! Slip your cable, and make an offing; or jump into a corner and stand by for a bend.

ED. Hoity toity, my little hippopotamus, who are you and what the deuce do you want? Madam, your most humble servant. Oons aren't you Miss Coy?

MARG. That was. Hearkee, sir, have you made your will? Your manifest for the next world? Got a clearance of the parson, and altogether made ready for engagement?

ED. Come, little fellow, I don't know you, and I'm busy just now; so be a good boy and go home.

MARG. Not till I've had satisfaction for the wrongs of a sister, you villain.

ED. Ha, ha! Here's a young snapdragon! Who's your sister?

MARG. Do you dare to ask me who is Margaret Agony? Come, sir, down on your marrowbones and pray for a minute or two, and then give the world the go-bye. I'm a dead shot—can snuff a candle—drive a nail—or pick the teeth of an alligator with a single bullet. So there's no chance for you. And my sister shall be revenged.

ED. Zounds, you young goose, your sister is a—

MARG. Yes sir, what is she? Call her names if you dare?

ED. She is the vilest jilt—

MARG. Jilt, you porpoise! Here take this pistol—

ED. Come, go my little valiant Hector, and buy her a sugar plum, or a doll baby. Zounds, you little cub, you deserve to be whipped.

MARG. O you monstrous fellow, you've broken my sister's heart, and I'll break your head—

ED. You little spitfire!

MARG. You wouldn't have her, but old Nick'll have you. You turned her off: If I had a rope and platform I'd have *you* turned off. You sent her to her home; I'll send you to your home—to your long home, d'ye see?—Do you see this pistol? Here's another: Come take it, and be quick; I've another affair to settle before daybreak; and then I must be ready for the steamboat and a trip to Niagara.

ED. Oons, where were you bred, you graceless infant? Come now, you are a very pretty little boy, and if you go home you shall have a gingerbread.

MARG. I'm not to be fobbed off, you trumpery fellow. I believe you are a chicken-hearted fellow.

ED. You impudent little fool, I'll—

MARG. What will you do? Fight?

ED. I'll spank you!

MARG. and ANNE. Ugh!

MARG. Don't be alarmed: I'm not afraid of him; I'm not afraid!—Ha, ha! What an impudent fellow 'tis!—Sir, do you think to scare me? I'm not to be scared. I'm just married and I wasn't scared at that!

ED. Married, you small mouse!

MARG. Yes, here's my wife, don't you see her? Anne, hold up your head! Just come from the squire, and brought her along to see her cousin revenged. Anne, my life, my soul! you shall see his blood!

ED. Fiddle, kick this little devil downstairs.

MARG. Kick! Kick me! Oh, me! I'll shoot you first. [*She aims at Fiddle*]

FID. Oh, lord sir—don't, don't! [*Exit*]

MARG. You see, sir!—If you don't fight, I'll cane you.

ED. Cane me!

MARG. And then I'll horsewhip you whenever I see you. I came here to fight.

ED. Pop away, you little blackguard—I'll give you a shot for nothing. Quick and be off.

MARG. No, I'll fight fair—Stand off!

ED. Zounds, I've no more patience than other men—Be off! [*Advancing against her*]

MARG. [*Offering at him*] Make ready!—You had better take one.—Take aim! [*He picks up a chair*] F— [*Enter Ha'penny*]

HA'P. Hold, hold! Don't fight, don't fight! There's two of 'em!

MARG. Spoiled, spoiled!—Begone, sirrah, or you'll be murdered.

ED. Out, you meddling monkey!

HA'P. Gemmen, gemmen! All a mistake! Set to rights all, all—Two of 'em!

MARG. [*Stopping his mouth*] I'll blow your head off. Vanish. [*Exit Ha'-penny*] Now, you good for nothing fellow, I'll have no mercy on you. You have killed my sister, and—

ED. Killed her, you goose! Do you think I'm an Othello?

MARG. Yes, she took a dose of ratsbone—two ounces and a half—all on account of your cruelty, and now—

ED. Well now bang away as quick as you please. Two ounces and a half would kill forty thousand rats, or women either. Fire, you rogue, why don't you fire? If she hadn't been a jilt, she would have been the divinest creature in the world.

MARG. Well, don't grieve hard. They cured her with the poison-pump.

ED. Zounds, then 'twas all a feint! She *is* a jilt.

MARG. Make ready!

ED. A shameless, faceless—

MARG. Take aim!

ANNE. Ugh! here's Ned! [*Enter Doubtful*]

DOUBT. That rogue Ha'penny—Talking about mistakes. What's the matter? Anne, you shameless creature, is that you?

MARG. No, you fellow, 'tis my wife, Mrs. Dick Agony. You insulted her; and I'll call you to an account for it.

DOUBT. Be off, you young fool. Here, madam, now in presence of this man, answer me—

MARG. She shan't—She's my wife.

ANNE. Yes friend Edward, thee made a fool of thyself—

MARG. Hush!

DOUBT. Well, sir, is this youth your go-between?

ED. I'm in a mist—I begin to feel—

DOUBT. Yourself in a hobble. This is all juggling. Will you go?

ED. Lead on. We'll fight and explain afterwards.

ANNE. Oh, they'll fight!

MARG. Stop, I say, shipmates, what are you about? If there's fighting going on, I'm the man for it. I challenge you both. Won't you stop? Make ready!

ED. You crazy boy!

MARG. Take aim!

DOUBT. Come on—

MARG. Fire!

DOUBT. You goose! [*She fires*] Zounds you'll murder us! [*Reenter Ha'penny*]

HA'P. Murder, murder! You mad fellows, look at this book! It's all a mistake. There's two of 'em.

ED. What do you mean? There's two of 'em.

HA'P. You a'n't killed then? There's two of 'em. Why you see, I made—but don't look so cursed wicked—I made a mistake. There's two of 'em.

DOUBT. A mistake!

HA'P. Yes. [*To Eddybrain*] 'Twas that lady [*pointing to Anne*] went out the window; and 'twas the other [*to Doubtful*] paid this gemman a visit in the box.

DOUBT. You blundering villain!

ED. You delightful fellow, you've made me the happiest man in the world! And yet you unlucky dog, how shall I find her again? Where's your sister, you rogue?

DOUBT. Anne, my soul!

ED. Anne, his soul! Tol de rol dol!

MARG. Sir, she's not your soul; she's my soul, I thank uncle and the squire for it.

DOUBT. How, married! and to this three-quarters of a man?

ANNE. Yes, Edward, thee wouldn't have me, and so I thought I might as well take the first I could get. But my young husband shall be thy friend.

DOUBT. Blood and thunder! and you are laughing at me too, you deceitful girl!

ED. Tol de rol! Ha, ha, ha! Ned, my boy, I pity you. What fools we were! But you've lost her. Why man she never loved you! Think of Margaret though—you rogue! She took arsenic for me, two ounces and a half of arsenic!

MARG. Ay, but she sent for the doctor.

ED. So she did.

MARG. And hearkee, 'tis suspected she has run off with him.

ED. Oons!

DOUBT. Tol de rol! Ha, ha, ha! Ned my boy, I pity you. Why man, she never loved you! Think of her, you rogue! She took arsenic for you! Come, will you go to Niagara?

ED. No, I'll go to New Orleans, and die of the yellow fever.

MARG. [*Aside to Ha'penny*] Excellent—but just hold your tongue a moment.—Hearkee, Mr. Neddybrain.—

ED. Eddybrain.

MARG. What would you say if I should kill the doctor and bring Margaret to you? and what would you do?

ED. I'd stick you up on the mantel for a Cupid, and worship you; and I'd marry her and move off to Niagara.

MARG. And you, Mr. Doubtful—Suppose I were to divorce Anne.

DOUBT. I wouldn't have her. No man's leavings for me, or boy's either for the matter of that.

ANNE. Edward, you wretch!—But, but—didn't you say something about the squire?

DOUBT. O you divine young Quaker! You're not married to this primer of manhood then?

MARG. Ch-a-rles!

ED. Oons, who's that? [*She takes off her hat, and lets her hair fall*]

MARG. I believe I'll not have the doctor.

ED. O you little mischievous sinner!—Make ready! Take aim! [*She runs into his arms*] Ha, ha, ha! You are the sweetest imp—But how queer you look!

AG. [*Within*] You rogue, are they married?

DOUBT. There, mischief's afloat! You are pursued.

MARG. Be quiet. And, and—just for fun's sake, tell uncle we are all married. [*Enter Agony, Calico and Fiddle*]

MARG. Uncle, I'll take your blessing this time, if you please. [*Kneels*]

ANNE. Uncle, I feel a little sheepish now. [*Kneels*]

MARG. Dear aunt, intercede for us.

ANNE. Beloved aunt, thee knows how the spirit moves us after a husband.

AG. And you are really married this time? Really, truly and irrevocably, both of you? Ha, ha! You dear—you disobedient devils you! Now don't you deserve to be kissed—that is—cuffed for your shameful behavior. Married, eh? I shall die laughing—scolding, I mean. Calico, you handsome old creature! Mum, mum!

MARG. But uncle, you'll forgive us?

AG. Oh, yes, I'll forgive you. Ha, ha!

ANNE. And you won't build a hospital with the moieties?

AG. Yes, I will—I'll build a moiety—that is to say, a hospital!

MARG. Dear uncle, you are joking. You had better forgive us, disobedience and the moieties too?

AG. 'Tis against my conscience. Charity, charity!

MARG. Heigho! Well then, uncle, we'll go home. We won't marry against your wishes.

AG. And a'n't you? Calico, lend me a garter—and do you hang yourself with t'other.

MARG. Well, uncle, you dear good soul, you'll consent?

AG. To be sure—No, I mean no, I *can't*, I won't.

MARG. You had better, or we may be forced to marry without it.

AG. I won't. You may drown yourselves.—

MARG. Appear, conjurer! Uncle, how you have been jesting! We were to marry with your wishes; you know—and you pretend—but no matter—Read.

AG. Hah, Mr. Ha'penny! Is that you? Will you pay?

HA'P. On Monday or some other convenient day. [*Reads*] Mem. *Tonight married my old housekeeper.*—That's not the place.

AG. That's my diary! Give it back! I'll prosecute you for stealing it—'tis a penitentiary business.

HA'P. [*Stopping his mouth*] *Stayed long enough to make me hope they were married, and that I was at last arrived at the summit of my wishes.* Wishes! That's the very word.

AG. Give it back, you thief.

HA'P. Thief? You curmudgeon! That's actionable.

MARG. Uncle, I'll keep it for you—for an hour—just till we are married—and then with your permission, I'll take it to read in the steamboat.

ANNE. Oh, I love to look over private papers. What a good uncle thee is!

HA'P. Mem. *I'll buy that house in Chestnut Street.* Oh, you old double-dealing fellow! Come, let's read some more.

AG. Give me back my book and I'll—

MARG. Consent, uncle? and think no more of charitable purposes?

AG. Yes, yes, I'll do anything.

MARG. Give us your wishes too? To be married? There.

AG. Yes—and to be hanged, too. Calico, you are altogether the most abominable—There's some comfort, I can scold now. And for you, you treacherous Ha'penny, if I don't fix you for all this.

MARG. Not so, uncle. I am very much obliged to this unlucky gentleman. If his blunders have created a quarrel, they have caused a perfect reconciliation, and if they have delayed a marriage, they have saved the moieties, ha'n't they, uncle? So, instead of building a hospital out of a forfeiture, pay his debts out of the sum he has redeemed. You have my authority for it.

ED. Come, we'll be married. And mine, uncle!

DOUBT. *Caught in the fact, uncle! What, did you mean to rob me of anything?* Ha, ha, ha! Come dammee, pay us the moiety.

HA'P. You see, old fellow, what knavery comes to. But, I'm rather run out of cash just now—Lend me a dollar and I'll forgive you.

AG. Humph. Woman!

MRS. CAL. Your loving wife to command—

MARG. Well, uncle, don't grieve or quarrel. Calico'll never run away from you, I warrant me.

MRS. CAL. No, I'll stick to him till death does us part.

AG. Humph.

ED. Come, don't be sulky. The mischief's all done: and the best thing you can do, is to attend us to the parson, jump into the steamboat, and trip with us to Niagara. Heh, uncle? You have a wife to show off, as well as your nephews!

AG. You think this is all very funny now! Well, it can't be helped. Care killed a cat. Calico, we'll go along—

MARG. Well, I'll go tumble myself into another attire. And if we ha'n't a merry time of it, it shan't be my fault. But first [*Advancing*] we must have permission of the proper authorities and here they are. [*To the audience*] Most potent, grave and reverend signiors—our sins and follies have been many, but if you are half good-natured as our uncle, you'll forgive 'em—at least the moiety of 'em. I was mad enough to open a battery upon these gentlemen: Let your artillery be as harmless as mine. Make as loud a report as you please, but let not Death be in it!

Fiddle . . . Doubtful and Anne . . . Calico and Agony . . . Margaret and Eddybrain . . . Ha'penny.

CURTAIN

▪

'T WAS ALL FOR THE BEST;
Or, 'TIS ALL A NOTION

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▪

■

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

SIR NOEL NOZLEBODY

SIR PHILIP LESLIE

MANLEVER

PROSPEROUS

SHEGOG

MAYBLOOM

NICK NODDY

LUKE LAUREL

SLUGGABY

LOUISIANNA

FLORA

KITTY CHATTERBOX

MERCY SLUGGABY

THE SCENES OF THE FOLLOWING COMEDY LIE PARTLY IN SLUGGABY ALEHOUSE, AND PARTLY IN NOZLEBODY HALL AND GROUNDS.

THE TIME OCCUPIED IS SUPPOSED TO BE A DAY, THE FIRST ACT HAPPENING IN THE MORNING AND THE LAST IN THE EVENING.

■

ACT I.

SCENE I: *An apartment in an alehouse. Sluggaby discovered sitting in an arm chair. A bell rings.*

SLUG. How now! Whose brat's lost? Clamour, clamour, o clapper, and I'll swear it's gammer Chatterbox's tongue ringing larums or her musty old teeth. Odsol! One might think every grinder has a bell-clapper, he, he! Well, at it again! I do vow now it makes my heart ache, to hear the merry man. He, he! He doth pull at the string, like a doctor at a luxed leg; and why, marry 'sblood? He, he! Because waiter Sam be out of place! [*Enter Mercy*] How now, daughter Sluggaby! Whence, whither, where?

MERCY. Father, father, how the gen'leman rings!

SLUG. Rings, marry 'sblood; He, he! And so does all brazen ware, he, he! And so does crockery when it's cracked, he he! and so daughter Claypot, beware the brass vessel, as says the fable of the Earthen Jug and the Brass Pitcher. He, he! You know when they knocked together, madame Jug cracked. And so daughter Claypot, 'ware the brass vessel. He, he, marry 'sblood, how he rings!

MERCY. Father, an' if I don't go, now next you'll hear him swearing. He's an awful man at an oath.

SLUG. 'Sblood, daughter Sluggaby, what does he swear? Does he vow you're a rose for the breast, or a thorn for the side? Hearken, how he rings! He, he! 'Ware the brass pitcher, 'ware the brazen ware!

MERCY. Oh, father, let me run to him; he will swear so shockingly, you've no idea.

SLUG. Ha'ant I, dame Claypot? Is my name Sampson Sluggaby that I've no idea of a gold-laced rascal, and a pretty demure devil, who loves to hear him swear so shockingly? I say, madame Jug, you shan't go near him. Ringing again, brazen pot? Help me up, daughter Sluggaby. So, well—'ware the brass pitcher. He can't crack a vessel of flesh.

MANLEVER. [*Without*] So ho, you rascal Sluggabed! Knave, ass, devil, beer-sucker! Appear this moment, or I'll break all the crockery in your house, you dog.

MERCY. Father, father, how he swears!

SLUG. 'Ware the brass pitcher. Crack the crockery! [*A crash without*] 'Sblood, 'sblood! Comin', comin'. Hear how he cracks 'em. Right, right, I

wish a heaven's name he'd break all the crockery in the house. No, not all daughter Claypot—not all. So 'ware the pitcher. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 2: *Another apartment in the same. Manlever breaking cups, etc.*

MAN. Soho! you sluggard—you ox, you hog! Crash, crash, they're going, you dog. Now for your grandmother's coffee pot. [*Enter Sluggaby*]

SLUG. Marry 'sblood! a God's name, not the coffee pot; all the crockery but the coffee pot, and the claypot. Brass pitcher, quotha! how he rings, how he smashes 'em!

MAN. Smashes 'em, you fat dog! Your sconce next, and that's your cracked Claypot. You rascal, must I break all the cups in your house and your bones, too? See there, you sluggish villain, that's breaking you for your laziness.

SLUG. Breaking me, he, he! I see there's a bankruptcy in the pattypan. I thank you sir, he, he! I'm much obliged.

MAN. For what, you beef-barrel, for what?

SLUG. For what, marry 'sblood! He, he, why only for taking the old crockery off my hands. I'm for a new apartment. And first as to the conditions of sale. Imprimis, the washbowl, two shillings and sixpence. Item, the blue pitcher, three shillings, threepence. Item—

MAN. You sconce, you dog, a penny ha'apenny.

SLUG. Item, the gold saucer, one shilling, twopence—item—

MAN. Your arm, you rascal, a penny farthing.

SLUG. Item, the red flower pot, four and twopence, item—

MAN. Your legs, ribs, and heart, you dog, a shilling sterling. I'll break your neck, your heart, your bones, you swill tub, you barrel of bacon—and pay out a shilling to the executors.

SLUG. Executioner, sir—Lord, now, how he mispronounces. A shilling to the executioner, and your old clothes. The hangman always gets the last suit.

MAN. Why, you fat villain, do you jest? You're a promising knave. I vow—Now go, like a good old rascal, and find me that new lacquey, whom my cousin sends out of London. I pray Heaven, he be slower of tongue, and swifter of foot—[*Enter Nick Noddy*]

NICK. Than this stalk of cabbage, whose head, legs, arms and everything else lies in the round compass of a big belly. Save you, sir, I have the pleasure of seeing you well; and if you be Mr. John Manlever, the monied man from India, I have the extremely exquisite honour of wishing you health, and delivering you a letter of introduction from our common friend, Simon Slideback, Esq., now received from the back of the law into the bosom of the Church, whom God prosper, for a Jack-of-all-trades. [*Gives the letter*]

MAN. So—[reads] So—Simon Slideback, Esq., a proselyte to the Church, and in the highroad to ghostly preferment either by sermonizing or starvation, to John Manlever, Esq., of Calcutta—greeting: Whereas you require a serving man at my hands, such as can be recommended for honesty, sobriety, continence, and a knowledge of his trade, this is to inform you, that the bearer, Nicholas Noddy, is a man that will suit your purpose, being as far as I can understand him, the most finished rascal that ever was begotten. Feed him well, suffer him to talk, and lash him soundly thrice a day, and you will oblige, Yours, etc., Simon Slideback, Esq.

NICK. Humph—a devil of a good recommendation, and prettily worded.

SLUG. He, he! 'Sblood, an impudent rascal, truly quotha.

MAN. So, so, knave. Our common friend, Simon Slideback, Esq. Humph—Stand back a little—let me examine your visage—Humph—well—throw out your toes.

NICK. [*Kicks Sluggaby's shins*] Aye, sir. What next?

SLUG. He, he! 'Sblood—Another brass vessel among the crockery! He, he! [*Exit*]

MAN. Excellently well, sir.

NICK. Sir, I am practised in the art of throwing out my toes. That, however, is one of the smallest of my qualifications. I can—

MAN. Well, sir?

NICK. I can pull a gentleman's nose, when he insults me or my patron. I can find my patron a wench in hard times, even if I have to rob myself. I can drink him six bottles of wine, and crack him the glasses. I can make love for him, write tender amorous songs for him, say 'em on occasion, and, on occasion also, say a handsome thing for myself. I can horrify jealousy, and bullyrag him afterwards into approbation of his undoing. Oh! I am a devil of a Ganymede, as the next petticoat shall prove. I believe I did catch just now the sight of one.

MAN. Hark'y here, you impudent, rakehelly dog. This house is sacred to your master, and if I catch you showing a lip at ever a damsel in it, I will slice your ears to your chops.

NICK. There is no chops, that I know of, proper for slicing but mutton chops. Just say the word, sir, that you are master of this harem, and rot me, if I a'ant as innocent and continent as a cat.

MAN. It is well, sir.

NICK. Sir, I will be continent as a cat, and look'y, sir, silent as a bulldog. If, sir, you have nothing particular, to which you would just now direct my attention, I will do myself the honour of wishing you a good morning. I have not slaked my thirst, nor finished my reconnoitering.

MAN. How, sir! You have then kept me in expectation for these two hours, because you have been reconnoitering some farmer's hen roost, you dog!

NICK. I beg your pardon, sir, you do me wrong. I examine no roost where there's anything fowler than a wench, which is a kind of game that no man who is chicken-hearted thinks of following.

MAN. Right, right, rascal, you're a precious wag. You'll suit.

NICK. To a button, and I knew it, sir, and that's the reason of my delay, for, rot my tenement, if I haven't all this while been reconnoitering the country purely for your satisfaction and somewhat for my own. I doubt not I'll have the scouring of it, for it is filled with abominable filthy women.

MAN. You'll do, sirrah, you'll do. I doubt it not, you are every inch a rascal. But look you, sir knave, I am given to handling this horsewhip occasionally.

NICK. Save you, sir; a whip must be borne in the fist, when one scorns spurs to the heel. I wonder how a nabob can ride!

MAN. Ride, you ass! I have a singular habit of using it on man's back as well as horseback.

NICK. Excellent, sir! Gash my gizzard, you tickle me. You mind me hugely of old Sluggaby's sign here.

MAN. The devil I do! and why, villain?

NICK. Because, sir, merely, the sign hath entertainment for man and horse! Sir, I will not deceive you, I never deceived a patron in my life. I am in a free country, and no man shall lather my back, who does not pay for it. I have law for it, out as I hate all law, as I hate eunuchs. I commonly compromise the matter after this fashion. If a patron strikes me, and I sue him, why look you, I may chance gain ten pounds damages, and lose my friend, which is a loss I abhor, seeing he may be a liberal man. But if we make contract, whereby for every lick of the lash, he binds himself to pay me a guinea or so, as the case may be, I take the lashes, get the money, and keep my master. Now, sir, as you appear to be a strong and lusty man, I will contract with you for a guinea a lick, so that you can lather me when you like, without fear of the law.

MAN. It's a bargain. There, sir. [*Strikes him*]

NICK. A guinea a lick—one—damme—a guinea a—two—godzounds! It's enough for a bitch—three!—rot my tenement. [*Runs out*]

MAN. A precious rascal. Now, how many might I count in this villainous house, who would not contract like this knave for a guinea a lick? [*Exit*]

SCENE 3: *Another apartment in the same.*

NICK. A losing bargain—dammee how he slashes!—Petticoats! Now master o'mine—A guinea a lick—humph—she's worth a dozen of 'em. [*Enter Mercy*] God save you, lovely damsel. Your name is Angelina—"Turn Angelina, ever dear," and as I may odd, "Behold your weeping vassal here."

MERCY. And, now, he's a proper pretty man. Sir, my name's Mercy.

NICK. Merciful powers! is this to make you mirth,
From Heaven you drive sweet Mercy to the Earth?

MERCY. Lud now, it makes me blush, he rhymes so sweetly—"Sweet Mercy, from Heaven" quotha!

NICK. Oh, matchless maid!—have you within your frame
A grain of that dear attribute, your name?

MERCY. Lud, lud, how he talks. Sir, s-i-r—what's your will?

NICK. My will! Why you're my will, my phenix of sweet things—my will,
my heart, my soul, my Heaven, my—my—my everything.

Behold me now, a very wretch complete,
As to an angel, kneeling at your feet—
I burn, I die—the tears are in my eye,
Have mercy, Mercy, or behold me die.

[*Aside*] Dammee that's rhymed well.

MERCY. Oh's me. Why you never saw me before, you didn't, and I don't
see a single drop in your eye, tho' I think you got one, he, he!

NICK. Oh, my love of loves! my queen of hearts! my deuce of diamonds!
devil burn me if I haven't seen you a thousand times in my dreams! Dammee,
I dream of you every night. Oh! this soft sweet hand, to my presumptuous
mouth.

Behold I bear it—and hum, hum, hum—m-South—[*Aside*]
Gods! what a line—try 't again, brave Nick.
Entranced with bliss, and more insatiate grown,
Oh, let me make your honied lips my own. Oh! [*Enter Sluggaby*]

Damn you, you old ram cat, what's your business here?

MERCY. Oh, lud, lud—I shall sink into the ground. [*Exit*]

SLUG. Marry 'sblood—ram cat—rascal—marry 'sblood!

NICK. Damn your 'sblood, I won't marry. What business have you, you
old curmudgeonly ruffian to interrupt a gentleman in his amusements! The
sweetest lines—dammee, I was just in the vein, never more happy, nor hit
so well in my life.

SLUG. 'Sblood, you finished rascal, *you* happy with my daughter! You brazen vassal! My Claypot? You rascal trumpet, you blunderbuss, you great brass carronade! My poor Claypot! The arrant devil—kiss this tawdry jack-anapes! this rake! this blister cloth! this red-hot coal from the furnace of hell!

NICK. Keep off, old gentleman—no drawing me over the coals, tho' rot my tenement, if I thought she was anything but your cook, or your chamber clout, rot me. Pray, sir, what's the time of day?

SLUG. Time of day, you dog!

NICK. Twelve! Well, snap me if I thought it was so late.

SLUG. You hellhound!

NICK. You have a delightful prospect here.

SLUG. Of getting your throat cut.

NICK. But I think this old willow rather obstructs the view.

SLUG. You shall be hung on it, dog! Damned finished rascal!

NICK. Now I think of it, sir, I have some business abroad. And hark'y here, you foul-mouthed, rotten antiquity, if you give yourself such airs about an innocent, chaste kiss, dammee if I don't cut your throat, and ravish your Claypot before your eyes. [*Exit*]

SLUG. He, he! A chaste, innocent kiss, quoth he? A well aday, dame Sluggaby, that thou art sleeping in thy cold grave with a tongue which could outring seven brass bells, now as blessedly silent as the dial of a clock, which wants winding up, for what with thee and this wench Mercy and the big brazen pitcher and the little brass pitcher, which is the master and the man, I know you'd never let me buy fruits more, but fully provide me with ale that runs out of the cornucopia. [*Exit*]

ACT II.

SCENE 1: *A wood, with a distant view of Nozlebody Hall. Leslie and Luke Laurel.*

LUKE. Now, Captain Leslie, if I may take the liberty of asking your orders, I have not much to say, but in a short way here's the man that will serve you to anything but ravishing and murder.

LES. Oh, cry you mercy, my brave fellow. Sure if your captain would take one of the crimes off your hand, you would be nothing loth to the other.

LUKE. Why, that's altering the question. Howsomever, I might take *one*, Captain, though belike you, if it was murdering, I would first rouse the man by a pull at his nose, or kick at his teeth till he drew on me; and then, d'ye see, it would be slaughter in fair battle; and as for the other, I trust there's

no soldier, who had half an hour to speak his mind to a woman but what would change the thing, d'ye see, sir, from a storm to a fair surrender.

LES. You are a soldier of honour, Luke—an honest man—and I would trust you to anything important. I am sorry your services are to be put on such a slight duty as a little scouting—a mere trespass, by way of spying. Now, sir, your orders are to this effect. You shall lodge yourself in some convenient ambush, nigh to the hall: watch till Louisanna makes her appearance—give her this billet—and—[*Enter, unseen to them, Sir Noel Nozlebody and Prosperous*] and your life, sir, call me nothing but Captain Shore—the poor captain, you rogue. [*Exit Luke*] Poor captain. Ha, ha—why this is plot for you. Sir Philip Leslie, metamorphosed into simple beggarly Captain Shore, all for love of Louisanna, and fear of Sir Noel! Ha, ha! [*Exit*]

SIR N. Sir Philip Leslie metamorphosed into Captain Shore all for love of the daughter and fear of the father! Zounds, Prosperous, I am amazed!

PROSP. 'Sdeath, Sir Noel, I am petrified!

SIR N. Why, God-amercy, I ask, are you in the heroics?

PROSP. Why, marry, knight, are you in the studs?

SIR N. A truce to your echoes, John Prosperous. Why, what simple asses are we.

PROSP. Are you, sir, you.

SIR N. To be gulled by this young coxcomb! For fear of me! Yea, marry, Captain Shore has need to fear me, and so may any beggarly rascal with a redback, be it from cloth, or the colour of the Kitch's lash, who comes wooing my daughter—a shabby captain!—with the kernel of a plum in her pocket.

PROSP. And yet he's a baronet—his father dead and gone, and he sole heir, Sir Noel. The old baronet is but lately dead. We are newcomers.

SIR N. Amazing! And this promising son fresh from the army, Captain Leslie being the dog, the hypocrite, to pretend to be only a miserable captain, so that I had well-nigh kicked him out-of-doors, for his presumption. Zounds, sir, I have a notion—

PROSP. A notion! Oh, for God's sake, Sir Noel, shun it as a serpent—a boa—a cobra—an alligator—a monster!

SIR N. Why, how now, I ask? Are my notions altogether so monstrous? I believe it was a notion of mine, that took you out of a hovel and put you into a palace.

PROSP. I stand rebuked, sir. You took me from a den of poverty and wretchedness, put clothes on my back, money in my pocket, gave me employment—and made me rich and happy. I stand rebuked, sir. Speak on.

SIR N. I have a notion then, sir, to punish him for his audacity—his frolic—but not so deeply, but he will in the end rise out of his troubles, happier

and more victorious. He'll thank me for it. Now John Prosperous, you say I have done you some service—will you do me one? Well—I thank you. Not now however; you shall hear by and by. Can you keep a secret?

PROSP. I have done such things, sir.

SIR N. Hearken then. Nay, you must be secret as the grave—at least for a time. In a few days you shall have leave to blow the mystery to the four quarters of the globe. Do you know the parents of Flora?

PROSP. Ha! How should I, sir? You say she is a foundling. You treat her as your daughter. Nay, sometimes make her assume the heiress, and push your own child down into the character of a foundling. Ha! sir, I do begin to see as through a mist. Ha, ha! pardon me, Sir Noel; on my soul, I never smoked you before. Ha, ha, I do believe I know one of them. Ha, ha! and that's saying as much as a man can generally say concerning his own parents, Sir Noel!

SIR N. Is the man mad? 'Sdeath and furies, what are you laughing at?

PROSP. Nothing, Sir Noel! your honour. I smoke you. Ha, ha. Now pray, who was the happy mother?

SIR N. The happy mother, sir, died the day that Flora was born.

PROSP. Humph—that is not so comical neither.

SIR N. And this happy mother was the mother of this Captain Shore, this Sir Philip Leslie, it be the son of the late baronet.

PROSP. Look ye here, Sir Noel Nozlebody, I am a man as you say, whom you have made rich. If I buy free speech, sir, by sacrificing all, and returning to my kennel again, I'll do it, sir, and even then, in rags, scorn longer to consort with a villain.

SIR N. Peace, hasty, insolent fool. I say peace, till I speak, or I'll spit you to a tree. Do you think, virtuous, impetuous ass, that I am Flora's father?

PROSP. Why, why, sir—did you not say?—

SIR N. I said nothing, foolish man. It was your own groundless and boyish suspicions that put such a vile construction to phrases. I say the mother was as unspotted as the daughter, Flora Leslie, for that, sir, 's her name, is the daughter of the deceased, the sister of the present Sir Philip Leslie.

PROSP. Good heavens! Sir Noel, and how did she fall into your hands?

SIR N. I stole her. Nay, sir, do not start away nor look so savagely at me—and do keep that naughty word in your teeth, for I promise you, it has a marvellous bloodthirsty effect. I say, Jack, I stole her, and I'll tell you why.

PROSP. Do so, sir. [*Aside*] Is he not a cutthroat dog, a very inhuman hound?

SIR N. What, muttering, Jack? Come, put away those sour looks—they make you hideously ugly. Faugh, you are uncomfortable to look at. You

know little or nothing of this family. Sir Francis Leslie's wife and my own both died near the same time of a pestilent disorder. Sir Francis was ever an odd man, and one not fitted to educate a motherless daughter. Now I have always had some particularly good notions about female education, and having a regard for the family, resolved that the child should not be ruined for lack of management. And so, as I was about leaving the country, I carried her secretly away—and lo you now, she is grown up, in companionship with my own Louisanna, with a fine noble-minded girl; humble, because she thinks her birth lowly; accomplished, because she thinks herself portionless and in future to be dependent on her own merits; amiable and virtuous, because I have taught her to be so. Now tell me, Jack, isn't she well prepared for an introduction to her own natural and proper sphere? Won't she be so grateful and so pleased when she finds what I have done for her? And won't her brother, that pestilent rogue, Captain Shore, be delighted? Oh, rot him, I'll be revenged on him for the captain, and after this manner. But hark—what jackanapes is this. Come, we must vanish.

PROSP. [*Aside*] A most outrageously wise fool—a most humane and tender-hearted villain. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 2: *Part of the grounds near Nozlebody Hall. Nick Noddy.*

NICK. Rot my tenement, if she wasn't a morsel for a martyr. Miss Nozlebody, quoth I, with a look of brimstone, I am the messenger of love; not a Cupid, for he's a boy—not a Mercury, for he's degenerated these days from the deep Tragedy of Love's Triumph down to the light farce of Love's Disaster; but I am your humble servant, Nicholas Noddy. And so, quoth she, I thank you for your message, and admire you for your fancy. Prettily turned—wasn't it, Nicholas? Aye prettily, friend Noddy, but would have run better thus, I love you for your beauty, and adore you for your wit. Soft, Nicholas. Petticoats, gash my brisket! And a man, too! Oh, damn her incontinence. Now by the immortals, if that isn't Luke Laurel, the rakehell soldier, I'll muzzle grass for an appetite. Speak you too earnestly, mistress Venus—What, Luke, kiss your hand and go? Then he is a fool, and if I don't supersede him, rot me for an egg that won't hatch. Soft—coming this way? and with an open paper! Verses, to my gizzard, verses! Luke Laurel write verses—oh! rot me, rot me, rot me! [*Retires. Enter Louisanna*]

LOUIS. Poor fellow—dying by inches! A pretty way for a soldier to die. Calls me his lovely foe, too! What, a foe to a soldier, and not stab him through the heart at once! Poor fellow—then I must have mercy on him, and finish his pangs by one death stroke. Come, my weapons of war, eyes—

you must be getting dull. [*Pulls out a small mirror, and while looking at it, Nick Noddy peeps over her shoulder*] Heavens! heavens! two reflections!

NICK. I cry you mercy, fair Cyprian—I meant no reflections, neither on you nor your glass.

LOUIS. Well, sir.

NICK. I say, goddess of beauty and effulgence—it is not well for one so fair, so very, very fair,

Oh, grant me, Gods, to breathe her outbreathed air—

I say, damsel of damsels, peerless, matchless, inimitable beauty, it is not well for such an one to throw herself away upon a beggarly soldier, when there is one

Whose heart exhales in every outward breath,

Pleased to be lost in such voluptuous death.

See at your feet a wretched lover low—

Requite his love, or oh, complete his woe.

LOUIS. [*Aside*] A precious scoundrel—perhaps a cast-off player—Now if I have not his back scourged for this.

NICK. [*Aside*] It touches her—more, Nicholas.

Oh, heavens! I read forgiveness in your eyes;

And in your love, so on my feet I rise—

Ecstatic bliss through my spirit start—

Forgive me, love, I clasp thee to my heart. [*Endeavours to grasp her*]

LOUIS. Off—rascal, villain, vermin! Out upon you dog! Help here, ho! help. Dog—dog! [*Enter Leslie and Luke Laurel, the latter of whom throttles Nick Noddy, while Leslie catches Louisanna and exeunt*]

LUKE. Now, captain, I'll murder him in a twinkling, for d'ye see, there's provocation, and it's lawful slaughter. Aye, devil, do you grow black over the gullet? Dammee, whose here? Nick Noddy!

NICK. Eh, hem—hem, [*Coughs, and hems laboriously*] hem—Nick Noddy was his name, when his throat was open. Prithee take your finger away, I find it rather difficult to expire. Ha, well, obliged to you, friend Luke, ahem. Pray tell me, as a matter of civil curiosity, eh, whether you have ever officiated as a hangman, or a bowstring mute at Constantinople, eh—

LUKE. Damn you, sir, what do you mean? Shall I choke you again?

NICK. Eh—not for all the world. A strangury is no fool of a disorder. Is your name Luke Laurel? Eh.

LUKE. Why, you *Ehem* fool, have I squeezed it out of your recollection?

NICK. Well—good—chem. Mine is Nicholas Noddy, sometimes nicknamed Nick Noddy and sometimes shortened thus—Noddle—D'ye hear, sir?

LUKE. And if you be old Nick, where's the difference, dammee? I'll tell you what, rascal, I have broken a glass of wine with you, and considered you as a gentleman. But now you are a dog, that I spit at. O devil, to do violence to a woman, and one that is mistress of the ground you tread on!

NICK. What's her name?

LUKE. Miss Louisanna Nozlebody.

NICK. I call no man a liar, that chokes like a bulldog, chem, chem. I believe you are mistaken.

LUKE. Dammee, I believe you were miss-taken—Eh, boy—ha, ha!

NICK. You pun, dammee! I'll forswear it, if he does it again. So, you are sure this is Miss Nozlebody.

LUKE. Sure—Miss-taken—ha, ha!

NICK. Then I am a dismal fool; and now I recollect me, I was so busy thinking of my shyness, I forgot to look into her face. Did you say your name was Luke Laurel?

LUKE. Are you mad, man?

NICK. I have to acknowledge to you, and to the lady, and the captain, wherever he may be, that I mistook this damsel for another. And now, look ye, Luke Laurel, provided you will keep your fingers off my throat, like a gentleman, I'll call you a scoundrel.

LUKE. Ha!

NICK. You did me the service to catch me by the throat like a dog at an ewe sheep, whereupon I say again, you are a scoundrel.

LUKE. Draw, you villain, draw, and I'll do you mischief.

NICK. Softly, good master Luke Laurel, since so you call yourself. I'll be with you anon. I have first a small affair of honour to settle with a certain damsel, and then, rot my tenement, I am yours, you thick-fingered rascal.
[Exit]

LUKE. I'll be with you, rampaging dog. [Exit]

ACT III.

SCENE I: *An apartment in Nozlebody Hall. Sir Noel Nozlebody and Louisanna.*

SIR N. Louisanna!

LOUIS. My father!

SIR N. I have something to tell you my child, which concerns your peace. You say you love this Captain Shore.

LOUIS. Say, father! Bless my heart, I say no such thing, not I. [*Aside*] Heavens, what can this mean!

SIR N. The lip is but a shallow hypocrite, my child, when the heart can be read through the eyes. I have purposely discarded him, because I thought you must have joined with me in esteeming his pretensions rather too slender for a woman of family, and I may emphatically say, of fortune. I have been mistaken in you—You adore him, and believe all his protestations. He has done you a service in rescuing you from the arms of that mad ruffian in the grounds. I am willing to try his merits—and you must assist me. If I find him, as you in your heart consider him—a gentleman of principles and sincere esteem—why then I shall oppose your wishes no longer. You understand me.

LOUIS. Understand! [*Aside*] Not I father—it sounds odd—a notion, I'll swear. [*Aloud*] What am I to do, my father?

SIR N. You are to try your skill at acting—acting two characters, which are thought to come extremely naturally to your sex—the coquette, and the hypocrite.

LOUIS. Sir, I jump at your proposal with the utmost joy—nothing easier in the world—except playing the fool, which is the most natural thing that ever was. Bless me, what sport—and who must I coquette with?

SIR N. Mr. Shegog.

LOUIS. Heaven save me, father! And yet—ha, ha, ha! Oh, you are the sweetest pa alive. Mr. Shegog! Oh, the divine, dismal, delectable old creature! He's in the garden; I'll run to him, and such sweet things I'll say, and such killing looks I'll give him—Oh, but I'll make his old eyes shine, and his old pulse dance, and his old teeth chatter, and his old knees knock together. Oh, the divine, the sweet-sour, beautiful-ugly, pleasing-horrible old curmudgeon!

SIR N. Hold, daughter. You must promise me on your honour neither by word, message, look, nor sign to let the captain into the plot. Such a treason banishes him from you forever.

LOUIS. I promise. [*Aside*] If he's ass enough to grow jealous of Shegog, why, gadamercy, let him go. I promise, dear ugly, little old man!

SIR N. Go, my girl—and send Flora to me immediately. [*Exit Louisanna*] Now I have a notion this is an excellent good plot. I'll move their jealousies of this Manlever and Leslie. I'll see how they can stand trouble. And faith, what's more I have a shame of making the two young dogs jealous of each other—excellent—and as for this Captain Shore—this metamorphosed baronet

—by heavens, I'll give his duplicity a lesson of pain, which he'll thank me for. [*Enter Flora*] Bless you, my daughter.

FLORA. Sir Noel, you are kind—and yet I love you as if you were my father.

SIR N. [*Aside*] A sweet lovely child. Now if I had not stolen her, she never had loved an old rascal like me. There's one good out of a notion. [*Aloud*] Flora, I am concerned at some evil reports I have heard affecting Mr. Manlever's character.

FLORA. Then, sir, they are as false as envy and malice can make them, and you do both him and yourself wrong to receive them.

SIR N. I receive them, my child, as an experienced man should, with doubt and hesitation.

FLORA. No man doubts Mr. Manlever's honour, sir.

SIR N. Nor woman neither, I fancy. Flora, you must consider that I am anxious to further your interests in all things; and my experience should be serviceable to you. Mr. Manlever has addressed you as my only daughter and heiress. He knows no other. What if the veil were taken from his eyes, and he beheld you an unknown maiden, without father, brother, kinsmen, or portion; not that you are without portion, for I swear, by heavens, you shall share equally with my child.

FLORA. Sir, you speak true. It is criminal, base to deceive him any longer. He shall be told that the maiden he loves is poor and destitute—one whose birth may have even been ignominious, since it happened under such extraordinary mystery—one that has been so wretched and forlorn as not even to have known the light of a parent's eye, nor felt the warmth of a parent's caress. Robbed from them, stolen from them, sir, for I feel, something speaks to my very soul, that they did not forsake nor expose me. Nurtured in kindness to be sure, Sir Noel, but oh, sir, what misery is it to grow up in the midst of strangers and feel, know that you are caressed not because your birth, but your destitution lays claims on their compassion! And they—perhaps they, sir—were left to their childless anguish—to wither out years of agonizing search, till doubt, racking doubt settled into certain despair, and despair into the—oh, heavens—the untimely grave!

SIR N. [*Aside, and in disorder*] Great God—if it were not for this, that notion had made me happy. She talks of her bereaved father—and yet he died but lately. And yet it must have been of a broken heart. And she, too, poor miserable child, she is often embittered by these dismal thoughts. Haven't I been stabbing them—killing 'em piecemeal and all to do good? Good in design, but wasn't it inhuman in practice, and horrible in effect. John, say, it killed the old man. What, live eighteen years with a broken heart! Fie, fie!

FLORA. Sir Noel! Sir Noel! How he does mutter, and toss the air! and now he laughs—oh, heavens, he is in a fit—Sir Noel!

SIR N. Ha! what—well!

FLORA. Dear, father, let me call you father—you are ill—your face is flushed—your eyes are wild—and haggard.

SIR N. It is over, my child—a most unpleasant fit—get me some water—no, don't ring. [*She retires*] Were it not well to tell her? She is unhappy—so am I—but her brother, her brother. Aye, I must teach him a lesson, and if I blab yet, all that notion is lost forever. It will only be for a few days—and then they shall all be happy—all, all, and I, too,—that's if it did not kill the old man. [*Flora returns with water*] Thank you my child, thank you. Pray be easy. We all love you as if you were our own, own blood and kin. Now I have heard—but I dare not tell you anything—it is so slight—so distant—but be of good heart, and we'll find your parents yet.

FLORA. Oh, for God's sake sir, tell me what you've heard?

SIR N. No my child—not yet—I doubt it all—it is groundless, but I have sent—all is going on. My child, if my life will buy your parents, you shall have them, and Manlever, too, but do consent to try him, not by telling him who you are, or rather who you are not, no, not yet. Still be my daughter. But you must try him. Can you coquette?

FLORA. No, sir, I cannot.

SIR N. You must, must try. It will gratify me so much, and will ensure you of Manlever's love. Indeed you must, or you will make me unhappy for ever.

FLORA. Sir Noel, Sir Noel—if you command—if you wish. But I am foolish, obstinate, wickedly obstinate. To you everything—what shall I do?

SIR N. Now that's a dear kind girl. I know you will in the end thank me for your compliance—because it will do you much good. Mr. Maybloom pays you a visit today. Now do treat him kindly. Don't laugh in his face, nor tie a rag to his peruke, nor frown, nor look sad—but smile, and sigh and ogle him.

FLORA. Sir Noel, I am convinced you mean well, and it may be this foolery may end well—I am very happy you have selected this marvelous simpleton for my inamorato. [*Aside*] Because no man who had any respect for my intellect will suspect me of sincerity with him.

SIR N. My dear, I thank you a thousand times—but remember, no sham coquetry with Manlever in the secret. No, no, he must be in the dark—remember.

FLORA. I will obey you, sir. [*Exit*]

SIR N. This girl, this girl. Poor little simple creature. Now, Prosperous Jack [*Enter Prosperous*], I am exceedingly well pleased—happy as a dog; I

have persuaded both to my plans—and they and their lovers, too, after having smarted a little, a very little, a wholesome little, Jack, will thank me on their knees for this notion. It's a philosophic notion after all.

PROSP. Oh—[*Groans*]

SIR N. Hum! I thought you groaned! Well, sir, observe now, Jack, what will be the result of this! Captain Shore, the dog! I should have said Sir Philip—after writhing a while under the torments of jealousy, will probably tweak the nose of Shegog, and otherwise give the old silly dog a lesson, that foppery and making love are too ridiculous for his reverend age. I have often been thinking how I might serve him by a nice lesson of this kind. Then, Jack, as for Maybloom and Manlever—I know the latter of old. He is a saucy, hurly-burly coxcomb and one whose vanity must be lessoned by that precious castigator Jealousy. He was wont to dangle at Flora's heels even in the Indies, and there's no doubt it was love of her that caused him to follow us hither. Now I know he'll horsewhip Maybloom, and by my soul I'd give a thousand pounds to see the thing cleverly done. For of all the vain asses and conceited, witless coxcombs in the kingdom, Maybloom is the greatest, a certain and inimitable fool. Oh, what a notion, what a notion!

PROSP. Oh—[*Groans*]

SIR N. Ha! Prosperous! Are you sick? What's the matter?

PROSP. Nothing, sir. Pray, sir, now, Sir Noel, be so good as to tell me how Louisanna's coquetting with a rank, superannuated old coxcomb, will punish Sir Philip for his misbehaviour—his violent sin of aping the captain?

SIR N. Ha, ha! Jack—your wit is a measured one. There's another notion to follow.

PROSP. Oh—[*Groans*]

SIR N. Jack, you must be sick. I see it in your face. You look deathly pale. Bless me, you must have brought the yellow fever with you. You have the true mahogany skin, the jaundiced eye. John, you must be blooded—I've a notion—

PROSP. God save me, Sir Noel, I am exceedingly well. Don't make me sick by telling me I am so. Notion, quotha, to be blooded?

SIR N. Well, Jack, I'm glad to be mistaken. As for this second notion—I vow you look feverish again—it is—I mean Sir Philip and Manlever shall be jealous of each other. And after that such a notion for the captain. Heavens! I feel like a Syangus or a Solon when I think of it! Oh, Jack!

PROSP. Oh—[*Groans*] Sir Noel, Sir Noel, are you mad? raving? distracted? Sir, I must tell you, if you were my father, you act more like a fool than a philosopher, more like a savage than a Christian, with your notions. What, sir—is it the spirit of anything less than a lunatic or a devil, that could

tempt you to rob a father of his child?—and that father, too, one whose heart, just bleeding from the blow which destroyed the wife of his bosom, was beginning to find comfort in the motherless orphan she had left him! And why, sir? Because, in the plenitude of presumption, you took upon yourself to determine a fond father unfit for the management of his own child! Great God! Is this wisdom? Is this humanity? Is this religion?

SIR N. [*In disorder*] John, John—I tell you their sorrows caused the child to be neglected. She was left to the direction of hirelings. And I am sure if Sir Francis had but known the feelings of the ravisher, he would have been content, aye and grateful. I'm sure of it. I'm sure of it.

PROSP. Sure—ah, had you been but sure of his double wretchedness! His wife dead—his daughter stolen away!—perhaps, he might have thought, to be bred up to sin and infamy—for who, think you, he would look upon as the barbarous thief, but one that was of the vilest, the most degraded, unprincipled stamp. Aye, sir, you have need to shudder—I have made inquiries and learnt from old Sluggaby, that for years, aye, sir, for long miserable years, the newspapers were filled with Sir Francis's loss, and offers of half his fortune for the recovery of his child. Sir, if you regard not parental feelings, have you no fear of the law?

SIR N. Law!—law! Aye, now you rouse me. Law! Observe you, sir, he that does his duty fears not the law; and that man is a villain, and not a philosopher, who from vain fears of laws, inappropriate, unjust, and unreasonable, hesitates to do what conscience and the plainest principles of morality indicate as his duty. Did the law make it criminal and punishable to relieve a starving beggar, sir, what man would regard it, when the squalid wretch asked sustenance of him? Shame on you, sir. If you saw an abandoned mother—and such are found, often found, preparing her hapless child for prostitution and vice—would you not snatch away the victim of her unnatural nurture, though the law threatened you with punishment? I have you, sir, I have you. You may perceive, if you will allow yourself a little latitude and liberality of mind, that my notions, sir, all spring out of the purest, the best motives, and from the most satisfactory and acknowledged principles of morality. [*Exit*]

PROSP. He is the strangest, most contradictory, moral villain in the world. Nothing will prevent him from putting a notion into practice; and what is most extraordinary, all his notions he defends as the offspring of morality and benevolence. And so they are, but morality strangely misled, and benevolence marvellously perverted. And I have been the fool to promise him solemnly not to betray his secret! Well done, wisely done, John Prosperous. But I will watch him and his notions, and before wrong and outrage shall be morally and benevolently done again, I will reveal, even if it be perjury to do so. [*Exit*]

SCENE 2: *A woodside near Nozlebody Hall. Louisanna, Flora, and Kitty Chatterbox.*

LOUIS. How now, Flora? Thou art as solemn as one of the owls that perch on these old oaks. Is thy soul wandering back again to the palm-tree bowers of India, listing the blustering vows of the young nabob?

KITTY. And as proper a man as ever said Plumb to his guinea bags; though, the Lord bless me, I think Captain Shore, madam, is the properer, though the poorer man; and faith, an' if I had my mind—

LOUIS. Peace, now I prithee, Catherine Chatterbox, what know you of captains and nabobs? Cousin Flora!

FLORA. Indeed, Louisanna, your father is a strange man, for one that is so truly good. Is it not extraordinary that he should so often cause me, a poor nameless foundling, to assume the character and deportment of his daughter; while you, who are his only child in the world, are as often made to descend to mine! And is it not strange, he will never let me acknowledge myself a foundling, as I am, but calls me alternately his niece and his daughter?

LOUIS. Very strange truly, Flora. My father is a man that has not his likeness in the world; one that is distracted by his own notions of good and evil, and so outrageously obstinate withal, that to do you a service, or in just to do anyone a service—for his philanthropy is universal—he would not hesitate to break the laws, and do all manner of apparent evil. He is governed by notions, and it is one of these that makes him deceive the world in our characters. You, for instance, he has always with the young nabob and a few others, passed off as his daughter, and poor me as his niece; whilst with the captain, and old Shegog, and a few more, to you, I am the absolute, and you the kinswoman. Ha, ha! My child, why do you wonder at him? Does it not afford us an infinite deal of amusement? And why need we question into his motives? Heaven bless me! I would not care, if the old gentleman should pass me for a Hindoo princess, no not I; or a Brahman idol, carved out of wood, and Christianized into living flesh.

FLORA. Ah, Louisanna, but there are a few who know me as I am—your father, yourself, and Mr. Prosperous know me to be a poor nameless foundling, rescued by your humane parent from infamous hands, and now supported by his bounty.

LOUIS. Hush, hush. Methinks this English air agrees not with your spirits.

KITTY. Lord bless me, if yonder isn't the captain and Luke, shining with their gold tassels and buttons! As for Luke, he is a low-minded, purblind fool, that spends day and night at old Sluggaby's ale cask. And some, forsooth, say

he is recruiting after that jade's minx, Mercy. Lord, lord, as if there wasn't her better in the land!

LOUIS. Away! We must not be seen. [*Exeunt*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I: *The alehouse. Nick Noddy and Mercy.*

MERCY. Oh, lord, sir, if father Sluggaby catches me again, he will so ram-page it, he will.

NICK. My golden vessel among the clay-pots, cut me, if old Snapdragon is not cruel; and I advise you to mind him no more than a cat. Rot me, loveliness, I wouldn't mind him.

MERCY. Lord, now, not mind my father? Why it's the first commandment—"Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long"—

NICK. Right, my sprig of roses—honour him, but, rot me, don't mind him. "That thy days may be long!" Why, thou nonpareil of youth and beauty, do you want to be an old woman? The ugly thing! Faugh—

MERCY. To be sure, one wouldn't like to live so long as to grow ugly—I wouldn't.

NICK. Then hearken to me, damsel. Youth and beauty are soon over; then, rot my tenement, one grows old and ugly. Now, slash me, one's wisdom is shown in enjoying himself while youth and beauty lasts. Therefore I say, now is the time: kiss me.

MERCY. Oh, lord! Oh, lord! not for the world. I wouldn't kiss a man. I never did kiss anybody but Luke, and then—

NICK. Luke! What Luke? Luke Laurel? Ehem!

MERCY. Lord a mercy. Do you know Luke?

NICK. I know a man called Luke Laurel, ehem, who is considered to be the arrantest scoundrel in three kingdoms.

MERCY. Then I'm sure it's not my Luke Laurel, for he's a sodger and a brave man, and he'd fight you if you told him so.

NICK. Fight me! No, my heart's-ease, my sunflower, my aloes—[*Aside*] for it's a bitter thing to me that Luke Laurel has tasted, ehem, my pink, my carnation [*Aloud*] he'd not fight me. I suppose you are acquainted with his wife, Dusty Bets that was? [*Aside*] Humph, that will do.

MERCY. His wife. Lord, lord, what do you mean? He's not married to anyone. I say he isn't—and you're a nasty bad man to say so, you are—for he's promised to me, he is. [*Sobs*]

NICK. Poor Mercy! And is it possible he has been making a fool of you! He is married.

MERCY. I'll not be made a fool of by anybody. He a'ant married, he a'ant; he sha'n't be—for he's promised to me, he is.

NICK. I tell you, my dainty love, he is married, and to my own cousin Dusty Bets, but he's a wild rascal, a rampaging lion, that walks about seeking whom he may devour. Now don't you scorn him, the rascal?

MERCY. Yes, I do, I hate him, I do, and I'll do him a mischief. I'll marry you just to spite him, for all I don't love you, I'll marry you just to spite him.

NICK. Rot me, I see you are a girl of spirit. But as to the matter of matrimony, why, slash me, it's against my principles, and you can spite him an easier way. The bell! Damn you, sir, can't you be easy? Ring, will you? There, ring away, and be damned to you, for a gull that lashes at a guinea a lick. Come, kiss me wench, and I'll tell you how you can spite him—now kiss me and wipe your face.

MERCY. I don't like to kiss anybody—and how do I know but you are married, too?

NICK. You may be easy there, my maid of Cyprus, for I'd sooner be damned, than keep a wife. Dinging again! Humph, kiss me wench, or he'll be here, with his guineas. So!—then. [*Kisses her, and enter Manlever*]

MAN. Ha, dog! Didn't I warn you? Now, rascal—[*Lashes him*]

NICK. A guinea a lick. One—dammee, sir, you cut like a razor. I'm continent sir—I'll put you at two guineas.

MERCY. He, he—lord, it makes me laugh, for I think he's married too. [*Enter Sluggaby*]

SLUG. How now, the big and the little brass pitcher! "Mr. John Manlever, Esq." [*Presents a letter*]

MAN. [*Aside*] "Sir Philip Leslie presents his compliments to his friend John Manlever, Esq. and will do himself the honour of a visit in half an hour." Humph, and what the devil does *he* here? So—so—now I recollect, the Leslie estate lies somewhat hereward—

SLUG. Your honour, I believe the gentleman has come. The dog that brought 'im was dead drunk. Show him in, sir?—aye. [*Exit*]

MAN. Now, let me see you master of ceremonies to my visitor; and if you place your nose within a yard of this wench again, I'll dismiss you, sir, with a dozen sound strappadoes to your back as shall be worth fifty guineas a piece, instead of one, you dog. [*Exit*]

NICK. Humph. Well done for a nabob, or a jackass. To leave temptation in your mouth, and tell you not to bite at it! Wench, did you observe?

MERCY. He, he! I did observe his honour doing that for you, which it is your business to do for him—I did.

NICK. Humph. What's that?

MERCY. Dusting your jacket, he, he!

NICK. Right. You are a wench of wonderful wit. I adore you. Now you observe what I suffer for love of you? The nabob threatens to dismiss me with a few more of the strappadoes, if I look at you. Rot me now, gratitude should teach you to worship me, for spite of all I love you, and I swear it by the five fingers on this beautiful, delicate, magical, little hand. Do you think Luke, the married rascal, would suffer thus for you? [*Enter Leslie and Luke Laurel*]

MERCY. [*Seeing them*] [*Aside*] Lord, lord, oh. Now if I don't spite him, I will—married—oh, me! [*Aloud*] Well, you are a dear, sweet, pretty man—

NICK. Now, gash my liver, if that isn't right. Kiss me, you beautiful devil. Humph. Damn 'em! Your servant, sir. I have the honour to demand if you be Mr. Manlever's friend?

LES. Ha, dog! Luke, isn't this the ruffian?

LUKE. It is, sir, and, by God, sir, I have a small matter to settle with him for another assault, if you please, sir.

LES. Peace, sir. No brawling here—on your life. We'll see into it. Watch him, sir, but no brawling yet on your life. [*Exit*]

MERCY. He, he, Nicholas. What ugly man's that?

NICK. [*Aside*] Right, right, cut him. But not a word of his being married. [*Aloud*] Why, Heaven save me! Are my eyes open? *You*, my old friend Luke Laurel? And I not know you? Why, split my nozzle, how are you?

LUKE. Look you here, rascal, I am under orders not to brawl here—and so keep that paw of yours out of my reach, or I may chance to cram it down your throat.

NICK. A thousand pardons, warlike sir, I swear I took you for my old friend, Luke Laurel. But as it is a mistake, I pray you pardon me. And so, Mercy, sweet, as I was saying—[*Retires with Mercy, making love in dumb show*]

LUKE. Old friend! Luke Laurel! Who am I? Isn't that Mercy Sluggaby? and that Nick Noddy? "An affair of honour with a certain damsel." Bitch-cat! She-devil! So, here, dog! [*Collars Nick. and drags him in front*] Shall I choke you again, or stab you in the gizzard?

NICK. Ehem. I have not the pleasure of understanding you, nor your threats, Master Laurel. And as my throat is naturally very delicate, I pray you take your nasty claws from my neckcloth.

LUKE. Villain, tell me what you know of that jilt devil there.

NICK. I'll tell you nothing, good fool, till you loose your knuckle. Nay, and if you don't, rot me, I shall be extremely sorry to pass such a thing as a knife over 'em. [*Feels for knife*]

LUKE. Dog—dog—[*They struggle together*]

MERCY. He'll kill him, he'll kill him, he will! Lord, now, but Luke be strong! Oh, your honour! your honour! [*Reenter Manlever and Leslie*]

BOTH. How now, knaves!

LES. Luke, rascal! is this the way you obey orders?

MAN. Stand back there, Mr. Ruffian, and look you now to your defense; for I promise you, you stand in danger of hanging.

NICK. Sir, I must confess that hanging is only a modification of choking, and if you want a ketch I'll recommend this gentleman here, rot me, ehem. He chokes like the quinsy, ehem.

MAN. Peace, sirrah. I sent you this morning with a message to Sir Noel Nozlebody, my old India friend, d'ye hear, and have heard of a modest embellishment you added to the message, such sir, as the very trifling offense of offering violence to his daughter, villain. Ha! sir—what do you answer to this?

NICK. I answer as an Englishman, sir, by demanding to know my accuser.

MAN. He is there, sir, Captain Shore.

NICK. Does the gentleman speak from his own knowledge, or from hearsay?

LES. I speak on authority. Although present on the spot, my concern for the lady prevented me from casting a single look on the ruffian. Stand forward, Luke. Who is this fellow?

LUKE. He is the man. And I'll swear to him.

NICK. I hope you are satisfied, now, your honour.

LES. We are, you brazenfaced hound, and will straight conduct you before a magistrate for wholesome conviction.

NICK. And yet, rot me, it might admit of a nice doubt, especially as I can prove, *first*, that the charge is a lie, and *second*, that this gentleman here had private motives for doing me a harm.

LES. and MAN. How, knave!

NICK. As to the latter, your honour, both the gentleman and myself profess a friendship for this damsel, and I have the felicity of being a stumbling-stone to him—for which he has threatened me more than once. She, sirs, is a beam in his eye, and I, rot me, am a beam in his.

LES. and MAN. How now, Luke?

NICK. [*Aside to Mercy*] Tell 'em I walked with you from the hall. It will spite him.

LUKE. Look you, your honours, I scorn to say he lies in the matter of my having had a friendship for the damsel—and admit to do him a harm therefore. But it shall be in a lawful way. I say he is a liar to deny the matter, seeing that I choked him, till he begged off, saying he had made a mistake in the lady.

NICK. Rot me, your honours, I might have taken an amorous freedom or two, with this damsel here—on the road, seeing she was at my side all the way from Nozlebody Hall to Sluggaby Alehouse. [*Aside*] Say so, Mercy, it will spite him. [*Aloud*] And if this is the lady he speaks of, why, rot me, he is right, in all save the matter of violence. How is it, Mercy?

MERCY. Spite him, lord. He, he. Your honours, he did kiss me to be sure, on the way.

LES. It is plain as daylight. Luke Laurel, begone from my sight, for a dishonoured soldier.

LUKE. Sir, I will begone from you—but not dishonoured. No, sir, in nothing, see you, dishonoured, except in seeing one that could open his ears to a lying stranger, and shut them to a faithful servant. I'll be with you, dog, afore the sun of tomorrow—and you—devil! cat! cow!—woman! [*Exit*]

MERCY. Lord, lord, he was so bitter, he was—and now he's turned away—and all because I told his on him. Ah! me. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 2: *A garden. Louisanna and Shegog.*

LOUIS. Oh, you dear, delightful old man! Now I am afraid to trust you, you men are so deceiving, and lord now, you won't, will you? It would break my heart to forsake me, I vow it would. [*Aside*] The horrible old fool.

SHE. Me deceiving! Lord, now, me deceiving! Oh, the stars shall sooner forsake the sun, the fishes the sea, the ravens the carrion horse, the miser his money, the lion her young, than I, I Saunders Shegog, called esquire, and sometimes senior, tho' look you dear, I am but to you older than my nephew, and you see, not half so old as these envious young dogs report me—and a brisk, hale, young fellow. And if I have the gout, sweetie, it's not because I'm old, but because it runs in the family.

LOUIS. You old! Why bless my stars! I did hear one malicious, nasty, bad man say you were eighty-nine, and another ninety-two. But for my part I don't think you more than seventy-eight—you are so active and youthful looking, I think you could waltz. Bless me, can you waltz? Nay, now, you must—or I'll think you a hundred years old. Come now.

SHE. God bless me, damsel, it would kill me! Me waltz! Now I haven't danced these forty years. Lord! I mean these twenty—no—these fifteen—it

hurts my foot. No, dancing is an amusement that no young man of sense indulges in—it is only suitable for boys and girls.

LOUIS. Nay, now if you don't, I'll think you hate me. Laws me! I think Mr. Maybloom would waltz.

SHE. Maybloom! How now! Now I know you love Maybloom better than me. Now don't you, be a good girl—don't you?

LOUIS. He—no—The impudent fop! No, he's only a boy—a plaything—a wax doll.

SHE. He, he. I'm glad on't. Then you love me. Happy man, he, he. Mow Maybloom is a wax doll—a very doll baby—a very dull doll—he, he. Doll—he—happy man be his doll—doll baby!

LOUIS. Dear me, now I think these ugly spectacles don't become you. Fie—you look so old with them. Oh, lord, I'd never marry a man that wore spectacles—I wouldn't.

SHE. [*Aside*] Oh, lord! I can't see without 'em. [*Aloud*] Oh, now—my sweet, pretty, little dear!—not spectacles, oh, now! not spectacles? I'm sure they're quite fashionable; and I don't wear 'em because I need 'em, but only because they're so fashionable. And I love to be fashionable.

LOUIS. I hate the hideous things—if you wear 'em any longer! Now do take 'em off—that's a good, dear, sweet man. [*Takes them off*]

SHE. Well, you are so comical, not to be fashionable! [*Aside*] It's dark as doomsday, and 'sblood, I can't see but what she may be laughing at me! [*Aloud*] Now don't break 'em, nor lose 'em, sweetie darling!

LOUIS. Now you look twenty years younger. Heigho for a waltz. I hate a man that can't waltz. [*Whirls him about, and sings a waltz*]

SHE. Lord! lord—my foot! Oh, it makes me cough—ehem, ehem.

LOUIS. Why, you waltz prettily i'faith. [*Sings again*]

SHE. Do I, do I, lovey? Oh, my foot.

LOUIS. Like a dancing master. You step like an Apollo. [*Treads on his toe. Enter Leslie, who regards them aside*]

SHE. Oh, lord! Oh, lord—my toes, dammee—lovey darling—my toes—oh, lord! [*Sits down*]

LOUIS. Bless me now, if here isn't a white hair peeping under your wig—I hate white hairs. [*Pulls his hair*]

SHE. Oh, lord! damm—darling, you're a comical creature—a white hair! I wonder how it got there. Oh, I recollect I sometimes use powder. He, he—only because it's fashionable, he, he.

LOUIS. Why, heavens! Here's a black hair—the ugly thing. [*Pulls hair again*] Laws me! What a fine colour waltzing gives one! Now your nose is as rosy as a blood pudding.

SHE. He, he, it does—and it warms my blood. I'll kiss you, you sweet sugar plum. Shall I kiss you?

LOUIS. Yes, an' you can catch me. Catch and kiss. [*Aside*] The old goat, how he hobbles. [*Jumps about*]

SHE. I can't see her. Oh, you run so fast, you comical creature. I'll catch you—I'll kiss you to death. I've got you—I've got you. [*Hugs Leslie*]

LES. Avant, thou filthy, senile old hag.

SHE. Lord—lord!

LES. Thou precious morsel of iniquity! Thou most ancient calf! Ha, ha! [*To Louisanna*] Thou art the dearest coquette, the most incomparable creature! I swear I love thee a thousand times better for thy spirit. Do quizz the old ass a very little more—a very little more, for the sake of fun.

SHE. Sir, I don't understand such language. Give me my glasses, sweetie—that I may look fierce at him. Sir, no man shall love this lady but myself, sir, myself, sir, d'ye hear, myself, sir!

LES. Right. Now I look at you, I see a Cupid in all things but the feathering.

LOUIS. Sir, I am hugely pleased that you are; and I am determined to love this man, the sweet, little, divine old man, and marry him tomorrow, so fare you well, sir. [*Exit dragging Shegog along*]

LES. Ha, ha, ha! The pleasantest devil! Now I like such sport. I'faith, I'll join in the roasting him. [*Exit. Enter Flora and Maybloom, and Manlever apart*]

MAY. Miss Nozlebody—ah! My heart swells so, I fear my waistcoat strings.

MAN. [*Aside*] Aye, dog, I fear for your heart strings. Oh, hell! Can she dally with such a thing!

MAY. The weather is exceeding fine.

MAN. [*Aside*] Aye—but there's a storm brewing.

MAY. Now the little birds are making love on the trees.

MAN. [*Aside*] And the little devils under them.

MAY. Oh, oh! How my heart does fill. And how I could eat up this little hand, it is so sweet, and so white!

MAN. [*Coming forward*] Like your liver, coxcomb. Save you, madam, and you, sir. Out, rogue, or I'll cut off your ears. And so, madam—Flora. And so, sir.

MAY. And so, sir. Damme, sir—do you insult the lady?

MAN. Humph, sir—what's this sticking out of your face?

MAY. Lord, lord he's mad. It's my nose—my nose!

MAN. I'll take the liberty of leading you by the nose, sir, as all fools are led. [*Leads him thus, and thrusts him out*] Hem, hem—madam, Miss Nozlebody,

I wish you joy of your tool there. Hast thou not something devilish and abandoned in thy disposition, to suffer the caresses of this thing—this thing that has no name sufficiently vile and dirty to characterize him?

FLORA. Sir, I wish you joy of your manners. [*Aside*] Impertinent—to grow jealous of this *thing* indeed! [*Aloud*] I shall seek this thing, and try what satisfaction I can make him for your insolence, sir. [*Exit*]

MAN. The fever smite her low and devilish flame—
And we that live, the witness of her shame.

ACT V.

SCENE I: *Sir Noel and Manlever.*

SIR N. You do wrong, sir, to accuse my child of sincerity with this fool.

MAN. I tell you, Sir Noel, I saw her suffer her hand to be prest to his curish lips. She listened to his vapid speeches as if they were the inspirations of Heaven—looked familiarly languishingly in his face, with her lips parting at him to that degree, that, by heavens, sir, if I had not surprised them suddenly, I believe she would have glued them on his! Nay, more.

SIR N. Prithee, sir, no more. I know my daughter would not be sincere with this fop, tho' I feel myself bound to confess to you I have lately discovered in her a very coquettish disposition. I lament from the bottom of my soul, sir—I could curse her—but—there is a certain dog of a captain, sir, a villainous Captain Shore.

MAN. Ha, sir, for God's sake what of Captain Shore!

SIR N. You are violent, sir. Curb this devil in you, sir, or you may be guilty of bloodshed and murder.

MAN. Ha, ha, sir! What of Captain Shore!

SIR N. I will tell you nothing of him, sir, till you are calm. You have the very laugh of an assassin. Why, how now?

MAN. Captain Shore! Captain Shore, sir. Nay, sir, I am no more bloody-minded than an infant. I never did more wickedness than to pull a nose, in my life. What of Captain Shore! Why look at me, sir, I wouldn't kill a fly! Captain Shore, sir!

SIR N. I am grieved to the heart to say that my daughter has listened to his addresses—aye, this very evening—as I was an earwitness.

MAN. What—two! A fool, and a traitor—two—and myself. Why, ha, ha, she is an admirable devil! What did you say of Captain Shore! Humph—Sir—I know this Captain Shore—one that has told me a rank, foul lie. He swore to me he knew her only by report—and further, I confess I swore the same.

Fool, fool, to be gulled by such a pitiful knave! And you know him only as Captain Shore! Ha, ha! Hellish hypocrite—gulling you, too, Sir Noel—I thank God I have one fit object for mirth. Why, Sir Noel! [*Exit*]

SIR N. Heavens, how violent he is! I fear this scheme, so happy in all other respects may end in blood—I must go see to 'em. [*Exit*]

SCENE 2: *Prosperous, Flora and Louisanna.*

LOUIS. Amazement! Captain Shore—Sir Philip Leslie—oh, the dear hypocrite! And if you had but seen how he laughed instead of frowning at me, when I roasted the poor old Shegog!

PROSP. Amazement indeed—but here is more—Miss Flora, I give you joy of your brother.

FLORA. Oh, heavens! what say you? A brother? Who, who! Oh, how my heart fails me. Is he of the very lowest? Speak for heavens sake—who is he?

PROSP. Nay he is not lowly. He is called Sir Philip.

LOUIS. Leslie! Huzza—my mad captain forever! Embrace me, sister. Ha! on her knees!

PROSP. For shame, Flora, for shame! Rise—run with me if you would not have your brother's hand embrined in the blood of your lover. This moment I saw Manlever pass me muttering curses and menaces, and as I gathered from them, in search of Sir Philip. Come, come. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE 3: *Sir Leslie.*

LES. Ha, ha, ha! the dearest coquette. Dear, divine, little old Shegog! quoth she. Ha! who have we here? [*Enter Manlever*] Ha, sir! Mr. Manlever! And pray, sir, what may be your business here! Ha, ha! I can tell you such a good joke, for I believe I will tell you all.

MAN. Your confidence comes too late, sir. Captain Shore, or Sir Philip Leslie, sir—as you may choose—you told me a lie this morning—aye, sir, a base unhandsome lie.

LES. Gods!

MAN. Aye, sir, and more to it—you knew Miss Nozlebody only by report! Perjured dog. And yet I could laugh to find her as great a hypocrite as yourself.

LES. Ha, ha! and has she been coquetting with you, too, my blustering Hector. She is a rare sweet devil.

MAN. And you a rare, rank coward. Aye, sir, and you out. [*Draws*] Now for you, dog of a liar! [*Enter Sir Noel*]

SIR N. Hold, hold! for God's sake hold. What, what—Mr. Manlever. Stand back. Sir Philip—[*Leading him aside*] Aye, I know you now, sir. And great God, what misery has sprung from your masquerade.

LES. Sir Noel, if you know me, why then pray begone, and let me talk a little with this violent man.

SIR N. You shall not—nay, sir—you shall not. One word in your ear, misguided man, and your sword is nailed to the scabbard forever. Sir, you came to me as Captain Shore, and as Captain Shore made love to—

LES. Your daughter, sir, I confess to it.

SIR N. Oh, no—no—not my daughter. Tho' reported as such—not my daughter. Saw you her cousin Flora?

LES. A thousand times. What of her, sir?

SIR N. Flora, though passed off to the world—to you, as my niece—she is my daughter—my only daughter, sir—

LES. Well, sir, I love your niece then.

SIR N. Miserable, misguided man, you love your own sister.

LES. Ha, ha. My sister was stolen. Why, thou lookest exceeding grave. My sister—what did you say of her?

SIR N. I reared her—no matter how I found her—you shall know in time. Oh, had you come to me in your own proper character, you never had thus sought after your own sister! [*Exit*]

LES. Well, then—he shall not have her. Prithee, good villain, turn your sword this way. So well—thou'rt marvellous quick. Now here's your mark—sirrah, strike home.

MAN. Put out your fence, sir—

I will not stab you till you take your guard.

Come on, sir.

LES. I will not fight you. Nay, an' you'll not stab—

I must be gone—oh, damned, damned day!

Here dog, cur, caitiff, grinder of the poor,

Cutthroat and murderer; bestial libertine—

Ravisher of the orphan, and the robber

Of starving widows! Most ridiculous coward!

Well then, and if thou will not fight—Farewell. [*Exit*]

MAN. Strange! He is lunatic! That ominous knight

Hath with a single whisper made him mad! [*Reenter Sir Noel*]

So ho! Sir Noel—Pray you what's the charm

That, breathed with the outward ear, can stab

Even to proud reason in her inmost soul?

SIR N. Ha—what! Where is Sir Philip?

MAN. Mad—drunk—

Gone like a buck that hath a wild cat digging
Into his heart. Pray you, sir, what's the matter?

SIR N. Fly—seek him, seek him—as you prize the love
Of one that's true to you and to your love,
Despite appearances. [*Exit Manlever*]
O fool, egregious fool!

How all my schemes for good of men are thwarted!
Now what a most vain, barbarous lie was that!
Tell him my daughter is his sister! Heavens!
It was the sudden fancy of the moment—
But meant to try the mettle of his heart.

How now? [*Enter Prosperous, Louisanna and Flora*]

PROSP. Oh, sir! what have you done—

These notions, most abominable notions!
Even now we met him in swift flight, mad-like,
As if wild horror followed at his heels,
With rapier brandished wildly o'er his head,
And when we called to him and bade him stop,
He howled aloud—I will not own her, rot ye all—
And straightway vanished in a brambly copse.

SIR N. Curses be on my gray and fruitless head—

If ever I, from notions, thought, or impulse

Do good, or assay to do good again. [*Enter Manlever, Luke and*

Nick Noddy forcing in Sir Philip. Mercy and Kitty Chatterbox]

MAN. Swear not, good knight.

FLORA. Oh, heavens! my brother! Brother look on me!

LES. I'll look on none. What, dally with a sister!

LOUIS. Then look on me.

LES. Ha! Have you changed your voice! What, two!

Two sisters! It is passing monstrous. Who art *thou*?

FLORA. Thy father's daughter!

LES. Ha! And *thou*?

LOUIS. Thy—thy Louisanna.

LES. Then ye are two angels to my soul.

What, thou my sister! and thou not my sister!

Why, then there has been some chicanery here,

Which I'll seek into.—Nabob, will you fight?

Wilt have my sister, or my no-sister.

Ha, ha, my heart is light as a cork racket.

What's here?

NICK. Rot my tenement, I'm glad ont, for that's a sign ye'll swim in champagne. So Luke and I are friends—Luke having taken Mercy of me, and I, Nick, having nicked Kitty.

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Plays: *Knave and Queen* (Ivers Dean), *Old Love Letters*, *Hurricanes*, *Baron Rudolph*, *The Banker's Daughter*, *One of Our Girls*

EDITED BY ALLAN G. HALLINE

VOLUME XI

STEELE MACKAYE

Plays: *Rose Michel*, *Won at Last*, *In Spite of All*, *An Arrant Knave*

EDITED BY PERCY MACKAYE

VOLUME XII

ROBERT MONTGOMERY BIRD

Plays: *The Cowled Lover*, *Caridorf*,
News of the Night, *'Twas All for the Best*

EDITED BY EDWARD H. O'NEILL

VOLUME XIII

RICHARD PENN SMITH

Plays: *The Sentinels*, *The Bombardment of Algiers*, *William Penn* (fragment), *Shakespeare in Love*, *A Wife at a Venture*, *The Last Man*

EDITED BY H. W. SCHOENBERGER
AND RALPH H. WARE

VOLUME XIV

MISCELLANEOUS

Plays: *Metamora*, by J. A. Stone, *Tancred*, by J. A. Stone (one act), *Signor Marc*, by J. H. Wilkins, *The Battle of Stillwater*, by H. J. Conway, *The Crock of Gold*, by Silas S. Steele, *Job and His Children*, by Joseph M. Field, *The Duke's Motto*, by John Brougham, *The Spy*, by Charles P. Clinch, *The Usurper*, by J. S. Jones

EDITED BY EUGENE R. PAGE

VOLUME XV

ROYALL TYLER

Plays: *The Island of Barrataria*, *The Origin of the Feast of Purim*, *Joseph and His Brethren*, *The Judgment of Solomon*

EDITED BY ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH
AND GEORGE FLOYD NEWBROUGH

VOLUME XVI

HISTORICAL AND ROMANTIC
PLAYS

Plays: *Monte Cristo* (as played by James O'Neill), *Hippolytus*, by Julia Ward Howe, *Mistress Nell*, by George Hazleton, *Becky Sharp*, by Langdon Mitchell, *The Warrens of Virginia*, by William C. deMille

EDITED BY J. B. RUSSAK

VOLUME XVII

HENRY C. DEMILLE

IN COLLABORATION WITH DAVID BELASCO
AND CHARLES BARNARD

Plays: *The Main Line*, *The Wife*, *Lord Chumley*, *The Charity Ball*, *Men and Women*

EDITED BY ROBERT HAMILTON BALL

VOLUME XVIII

DAVID BELASCO

Plays: *La Belle Russe*, *The Stranglers of Paris*, *The Heart of Maryland*, *The Girl I Left Behind Me*, *Naughty Anthony*

EDITED BY GLENN HUGHES AND
GEORGE SAVAGE

VOLUME XIX

BARTLEY CAMPBELL

Plays: *The White Slave*, *My Partner*, *The Galley Slave*, *Peril*, *Fairfax*, *The Virginian*

EDITED BY NAPIER WILT

VOLUME XX

AUGUSTIN DALY

Plays: *Man and Wife*, *Divorce*, *The Big Bonanza*, *Pique*, *Needles and Pins*

EDITED BY CATHERINE STURTEVANT

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